

18th November 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 21.29.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr S Gurney
Councillors: Cllrs A Box, P Cunnington, L Forbes, D Hinton, P Hornsby, M Malvern, T Lloyd and A Tebboth.

IN ATTENDANCE

Arts and Culture Officer
Miss Rull and Miss MacKinnon

The Chairman opened the meeting with a request to the Committee. Recognising that we are stronger for the many experiences and points of view around the table she asked that the Committee refrain from letting debates become too heated and to maintain the respect around the table.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr M Fumagalli.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

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 S Gurney and seconded by Cllr M Malvern and it was

**RESOLVED
30049**

unanimously that the Minutes of the Arts & Culture Committee meeting held on 9th September 2019 (pages 15905 to 15909) be received as a true and correct record and that they be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman decided to consider Agenda Item 12 at this point.

DECORATED CABINETS (Agenda Item 12)

The Committee received and considered the request from Amenities to take over the administration of this project, agreed and resolved upon at the 3rd September Amenities meeting.

Cllr Forbes gave an overview of the project. The Committee thanked her for the hard work she had put into the project and the production of the attached backing document.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____



**RESOLVED
30050**

It was proposed by Cllr S Gurney and seconded by Cllr A Box and it was that the Arts and Culture Committee would take over the responsibility for the administration of this project for 12 months initially, at which time it will be reviewed.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Report dated 12th November was received and considered.

Video sharing to Care Homes:

The Arts and Culture Officer reported that due to a couple of technical difficulties and lack of time this has yet to happen, but will do as soon as possible.

Wokingham Living Advent Calendar 2020

It was reported that Cllr Lloyd, the Arts and Culture Officer and More Arts Trustees have met to discuss the future iterations of this event. Some ideas from the meeting have been able to be fed into this year's event, while others would need to be considered for the future. From this meeting it was not anticipated that any forward direction will affect the overall grant funding which was an immediate concern. As such further consideration for this event can come in the meeting with the post event report.

Science with Schools

The Arts and Culture Officer reported that a date for the pilot event has been set for September 2020. It was noted that a report on the pilot event and associated activities would follow after September 2020.

Board Gaming Event

It was reported that Eclectic are fully engaged and work is progressing for the event on 1st February 2020. The report will follow in the March meeting.

Graffiti Boards

It was reported that data gathering had started on the concept of Graffiti Boards, however further work was needing to be done on the viability of locations and subsequent communications with landowners.

VE Day request

The Arts and Culture Officer reported that the Town Clerk had been in touch with the Lions about the decision of A&C not to be able to financially support an additional event and the suggestion that the Lions may be able to receive a small amount to help fund theming the May Fayre. The Lions thanked us for the potential support but ultimately decided to not go ahead.

COMMITTEE BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)

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

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____



THEATRE IN THE PARK (Agenda Item 7)

A verbal update by the Arts and Culture Officer was received and considered. It was reported that the question posed to Facebook to find out more about what may stop people coming to this event didn't reveal any specific difficulties and did not generate a significant number of responses. The Chairman would like to utilise the poll feature on Facebook, however further consideration would be needed to construct a question to ask.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE CHAIRMAN/MARKETING COORDINATOR

The Arts and Culture Officer outlined an idea to try a version of Theatre in the Park in Elms Field during the Summer. This would be a single play aimed at families and looking to see if the change in location led to an uptake in numbers. The pros and cons of Elms Field were discussed and it was noted that the open space would need a PA system to support the event. While it would not be expected to take the full budget, as this was aimed to support two plays, it should be expected to require more than half the budget.

It was proposed by Cllr S Gurney and seconded by Cllr A Tebboth and it was

**RESOLVED
30051**

to trial a version of the event on Elms Field as described above.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

CULTURAL MONTH SUGGESTION (Agenda Item 8)

The report from the Arts and Culture Officer on an alternative approach for the Cultural Month aimed at reducing paper waste was received and considered.

The committee were unanimously in favour of the proposal. It was asked that the cost saving from the reduction in printing costs be redirected into marketing support, either through an increase in other marketing avenues, such as producing posters, newspaper and/or social media adverts or, if possible, hours of Marketing personnel time to ensure the event is supported in this change of format.

It was also suggested that the wording of the promotional postcard be crafted to highlight the range of activities rather than rely on culture as a catch all term. It was also agreed that the postcard should be used as a vehicle for feedback on the change of direction for this event.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

SUNNY SATURDAYS (Agenda Item 9)

The report on the 2019 programme of Sunny Saturdays entertainment was received and considered.

With regards to reducing the number of performers there was discussion on what the Council's priority was for the space. The feedback from multiple traders, during certain performances, reporting that they didn't feel they could communicate with their customers was recognised as an issue. As such it was requested that there was further consideration on increasing the proportion of acts that are not as loud, like performances aimed at children.

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The lack of open public seating near the performance space, which does not encourage the audience to stay and watch was noted. It was discussed if more could be done to signpost the performance space, including a temporary stage. It was reported that when this had been looked at previously challenges included a lack of storage for such an item and a lack of someone to put it up. Unfortunately currently both were still a challenge. A stage could be hired in however this would be very draining on the budget.

It was agreed that Sunny Saturdays would be twice a month (on the same Saturdays each month) and that performances would remain in the Market Place although some could be placed in our other spaces particularly if the act was not conducive to the Market. That the weeks chosen would aim to avoid our other existing events. The Arts and Culture Officer was tasked with identifying what would be the best option here.

Finally it was agreed to try to encourage, in the fallow weeks, performances in Peach Place.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

WOKINGHAM CHILDRENS BOOK FESTIVAL (Agenda Item 10)

The report on the 2019 Book Festival was received and considered.

The Arts and Culture Officer was thanked for the report and the work that had gone into this year's event. Thanks was also noted for the work the Young People and Families Outreach Manager for Wokingham Borough Libraries Service put into this event.

It was requested that some sort of information stand possibly a banner or more sustainable version might be made available at the Town Hall during next year's event to help inform off the street on the day interested visitors.

The recommendations were discussed. There was recognition that growing the event through the most obvious route of opening the Town Hall on both days, would mean a higher workload for staff, in particular the Arts and Culture Officer, which may not be sustainable. It was noted that the Book Festival requires, on event day, one person with a knowledge of the space and the kind of event it is, to provide overall oversight. Currently the only person who could do this at the Town Hall is the Arts and Culture Officer. It was recognised that asking the Officer to give up her whole weekend to run the event on both days at the Town Hall was a large ask. It was also noted that significant volunteer support was required to help run these events, which primarily for the Town Hall comes from Councillors, so there would have to be strong commitment in advance, particularly if the decision is made to grow the event.

The idea of a Teen/YA event was discussed. Councillors broadly liked the idea but would like a more formal proposal. There was immediate concern that if it was being run at a different time of year under its own publicity that it should be run with its own budget rather than relying on potential sponsorship income for the Children's Book Festival in 2020 to create the funds for it. There were also

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concerns that it would also generate extra workload that again may not be sustainable.

A concept where authors are paired with coffee shops was discussed. Although it was noted that this is primarily a ticketed event and it was uncertain how that model would work in our local establishments.

It was requested to revisit this Agenda Item at the next meeting for further consideration and it was suggested that the Young People and Families Outreach Manager for Wokingham Borough Libraries Service be requested to attend the next meeting to be able to talk and answer questions from that side of the partnership.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

OPEN AIR CINEMA (Agenda Item 11)

The concept of an Open Air Cinema on Elms Field in the future was discussed. It was noted that there were a number of nearby versions of this concept already. There were also concerns that the open nature of Elms Field would not suit a ticketed event and one of the direct neighbours of this space was a cinema.

It was agreed that at this time the committee were not interested in taking this forward however should circumstances change they would know where to get in touch with a provider.

The proximity of the Everyman Cinema was noted and it was agreed that a relationship should be built.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 13)

Cllr Lloyd reported on a recent meeting of the Public Art Group and requested that it be brought to the next meeting as an Agenda item. He was requested to compile notes to reflect particularly on ideas that could be within the Town Council's control to effect and ideas that the Town Council may have the power to influence.

CHAIRMAN

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS _____

