

1st June 2020

In accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 this meeting was held virtually.

Minutes of the proceedings of the **ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE** meeting held virtually on this day from 19.34 to 21.44.

PRESENT

Chairman: Cllr S Gurney

Councillors: Cllrs, A Box, P Cunningham, D Hinton, M Fumagalli, P Hornsby, M Malvern, T Lack, T Lloyd and A Tebboth.

IN ATTENDANCE

Arts and Culture Officer

Miss Mackinnon

Cllr R Bishop-Firth

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

There were no apologies for absence

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

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

**RESOLVED
30132**

There were no questions from members of the council or public.

ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

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

on a vote of 8 for (with 2 abstentions), that the Minutes of the Arts & Culture Committee meeting held on 9th March 2020 (pages 16037 to 16039) 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 22nd May was received and considered.

Invite More Arts to a future meeting:

It was agreed that for the time being, it would be best to invite More Arts to the next suitable date when meetings were taking place in person.

COMMITTEE BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)

The Arts and Culture Committee's budget dated to 19th May 2020 was received and noted.

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY (Agenda Item 7)

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their responses to this strategy in advance of the meeting. The strategy, and comments received, were discussed and a number of points were highlighted of particular importance.

The Committee noted that while fundamentally in agreement with the principle, that the strategy and any subsequent action plan would benefit from more detail and structure on achieving its aims, and sharing of evidence on how its conclusions have been reached. Additionally, more detail was requested on inclusivity ambitions and any information on how the strategy will tie into the Climate Emergency and sustainability work ongoing in the Borough. The Committee were keen to meet directly with the newly appointed Arts and Culture Development Officer and requested, if not already in place, if there could be Town Council representation on the Borough Working Group.

The Arts and Culture Officer was requested to take the discussion points and comments and formulate a draft Wokingham Town Council response.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

COMMITTEE REVIEW (Agenda Item 8)

The report outlining the work of the Arts and Culture Committee over the 2019/20 council year was received and considered. The Arts and Culture Officer was thanked for a detailed review, including the current position relating to COVID-19 and Town Council events.

The question on should Sunny Saturdays happen this year was noted and it was agreed by unanimous vote that due to the current events and requirement to socially distance that Sunny Saturdays would be cancelled in full.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

Cllr Fumagalli reported that the Science with Schools event would now take place entirely digitally, and he would continue to work with schools and lecturers to enable this. He reported that it may mean that there could be wider reach for this event than just the original school.

WOKINGHAM CHILDRENS BOOK FESTIVAL (Agenda Item 9)

The report outlining an alternative digital approach for this year's Book Festival was received and considered. It was requested to look at extending the content into schools in addition to the planned outreach activities. It was also suggested to explore the possibility of an e-book giveaway.

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

unanimously to proceed with the Wokingham Children's Book Festival as a digital event for 2020.

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NEW IDEAS (Agenda Item 10)

A) "Chalk about it" concept

Cllr A Box outlined a concept from Australia (that takes place on 31st August) for

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chalk art being used to destigmatise mental health. The concept was discussed and while there was concern that it might encourage graffiti it was agreed that proper framing of the event would minimise this. Additionally, ideas to use chalkboards instead of the Market Place itself or other potential locations were discussed, as was the addition of a professional chalk artist. It was agreed for the Arts and Culture Officer to investigate further for a future meeting of the committee.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

B) Singing Trees

Cllr A Box outlined a concept from Aalborg where new trees are planted and a famous musician who has attended the city gifts a recording to be played under a tree. It was discussed how such a concept might work for Wokingham. Ideas including alternatives to music, such as sound art, poetry and even spoken history and nature were discussed. Also the potential to get the schools involved in the concept and recordings, and the local Men's Shed and Maker spaces involved in producing a suitable delivery method. A delivery method would need to be reasonably weatherproof, vandal proof and sustainable.

It was agreed for the Arts and Culture Officer to investigate further for a future meeting of the Committee.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

C) Pride

Cllr R Bishop-Firth outlined what has been happening regarding Pride celebrations within the Town since 2019. The 2020 event was planned to have been a Pride picnic in Elms Field on the 2nd Saturday in July. It is now expected that the celebrations will move online and potentially promote smaller more front garden events in line with Governmental advice on social gatherings. The Committee were in agreement to support promoting Pride and suggested that for future years, as the event had a strong external organising body, that should they wish to look at more substantial Council support, they may wish to get involved with the upcoming grant process.

It was also suggested that the Virtual Museum may wish to look at the history of LGBTB people and activism in Wokingham.

D) Other Ideas

The following ideas were suggested:

- Youth Band event in Elms Field
- Online workshops for school children
- Charitable Community Fun Run which might be in partnership with WBC or another suitable provider. A reasonable 5km course might include Cantley alongside, Joel Park and/or Holt Copse.
- Some sort of event that champions and/or teaches critical thinking skills.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)

a) The following items for information were received.

- Councillors were informed that Wokingham Lions were looking at the potential for an October event on the Market Place akin to the May Fayre but much smaller. This would be subject to an

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appropriate day (the mooted extra October Bank Holiday) and the safety of attendees considering COVID-19.

- Councillors were informed that the Public Art Working Group were continuing to meet and feedback from the meeting was presented. It was noted that Cllr Lloyd may wish to consult with the appropriate Officer about the status of the blocks.

b) The Committee suggested that the following items would be beneficial to promote:

- The Committee wishes to ask residents if there was anything in particular they would like to see the Committee do. This may be through Facebook and/or the local newspaper.
- That Sunny Saturdays is cancelled for 2020
- That the Book festival would be moving to a digital platform.

ACTION: MARKETING COORDINATOR

CHAIRMAN

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