



# Wokingham Town Council

Town Hall, Market Place, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1AS  
Tel: 0118 978 3185 [www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk)  
Town Clerk: K. Hughes

**This Council Meeting is open to the Public and Press**  
**Please notify the Officer or Chair if you wish to record the meeting**

31<sup>st</sup> October 2023

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Arts & Culture Committee** to be held in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** at **7.30pm** on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023** for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the subjects and matters set out in the agenda below.

Yours sincerely

**K Hughes**  
Town Clerk

**Contact Officer:** Gemma Cumming, Arts & Culture Officer  
Direct line: 0118 974 0889 Email: [gcumming@wokingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:gcumming@wokingham-tc.gov.uk)

## AGENDA

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 2 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive any declaration of interests from Members on the business about to be transacted.

### 3 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC

The Chair to answer questions raised by members of the Council or public.

*This is an opportunity for the people of Wokingham to ask questions of, and make comments to, the Town Council. Members of the public are requested to restrict their questions and comments to three minutes. Questions which are not answered at this meeting will be answered in writing to the person asking the question. To ensure an informed response, please send your questions to the Town Clerk at least three working days prior to the meeting.*

### 4 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

To receive and resolve upon the Minutes of the proceedings at the meeting of this Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (pages 16809 to 16812), copy attached, as a true and correct record.

### 5 MONITORING REPORT

To receive and consider the Monitoring Report dated 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 (copy attached).

**6 COMMITTEE BUDGET**

To receive and consider the Committee's budget dated to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 (copy attached).

**7 MARKETING**

To discuss and offer suggestions with the Marketing and Comms Coordinator on publicizing the work of the Committee.

**8 SUNNY SATURDAYS**

a) To receive and consider the notes of the Sunny Saturdays Working Party (copy attached)

b) To resolve as desired on any recommendations made by the Working Party, highlighted in the report (copy attached).

**9 CHALK ABOUT IT**

To receive and consider the report on this year's event. To resolve as desired on recommendations. (copy attached).

**10 SCIENCE WITH SCHOOLS**

To receive and consider the report on this year's event (copy attached).

**11 NEW EVENTS**

To receive and consider the report on possible future new events (copy attached).

**12 FUTURE EXPENDITURE**

To review agreed expenditure requests and resolve on any additional ones.

**13 NEW COUNCIL STRATEGY**

To receive for information the new strategy agreed by Full Council. For consideration between meetings and discussion at a future meeting to resolve on how A&C's work will align with it (copy attached).

**14 COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

a) To receive information items raised by members.

b) Identify any specific items for marketing purposes.

**Arts & Culture Committee:** Cllrs Barrie Callender (Chair), Susan Cornish, Philip Cunnington, Alexandra Domingue (Vice Chair), Alexandra Fraser, Matteo Fumagalli, Sally Gurney, Morag Malvern and Annette Medhurst.

*In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be recorded. The purpose of recording proceedings is that it acts as an aide-memoir in assisting the clerk of the meeting in the compilation of minutes. The recordings are held in a secure location and deleted once it has been resolved that the minutes are a true and correct record.*

*In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies regulations 2014, persons attending this meeting may make their own recordings of the proceedings subject to the Council's Policy on Filming, Recording & Reporting on Council and Committee Meetings (copy available on request).*

## 04<sup>th</sup> September 2023 - DRAFT

Minutes of the proceedings of the **Arts and Culture Committee** meeting held on this day in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Wokingham** from 19.30 to 21:46

### **PRESENT**

Chair: Cllr B Callender

Councillors: S Cornish, P Cunnington, A Domingue, A Fraser, M Fumagalli, S Gurney, M Malvern and A Medhurst.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Arts and Culture Officer

### **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)**

There was a question from a member of the Council. Due to the complexities associated with the question it is to be considered as Agenda Item 9.

### **ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)**

It was proposed by Cllr A Domingue and seconded by Cllr A Medhurst and it was

**RESOLVED  
30699**

that the Minutes of Arts and Culture Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 (pages 16789 to 16792), copy attached, be received as a true and correct record.

Cllr Gurney joined the meeting.

### **MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)**

The Monitoring Report dated 29<sup>th</sup> August was received and considered.

### **Amendments to Committee Projects and Events document**

Subsequent to the previous meeting the Arts and Culture Officer has added in Decorated Cabinets to this document. Work continues to amend this document during the year, particularly in response to any strategic changes from Council.

### **Future Lunar New Years**

F&P have agreed the requested funds for this event. Work has begun on the 2024 event. The event funding will need to be picked up in November's meeting to confirm with F&P if A&C wish for it to be a recurring event.

### **COMMITTEE BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)**

The Arts and Culture Committee's budget dated to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023 was received.

CHAIR'S INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



It was noted that the financial IT system is not able to record committed expenditure for different financial years separately. As such commitments made now for future years (the Party in the Park most notably) will show up as a current commitment and give the impression of those events being over committed.

**SUNNY SATURDAYS (Agenda Item 7)**

The Arts and Culture Officer was thanked for the comprehensive report on this event. The event was discussed at length, noting that it worked much better in Peach Place than anywhere else we have held it but retained a number of challenges. It was acknowledged that it had not demonstrated that it had achieved its original aim and a new aim and direction for the event would be needed. The lack of a wet weather option or alternative contingency date was noted as was the lack of on the day signage to indicate it was a Wokingham Town Council event.

The Committee considered a number of options. It was suggested to use the budget as a fund for external organisations to bid for, to support music in the Town. It was noted that this may not fit into our existing financial regulations, we had no idea if any local orgs would be interested and we were unsure what level of control WTC would have over the acts and how it would fit into the Council's principles. The Arts and Culture Officer to do some cursory investigation to support future decision making.

Alternatively continuing with some form of musical event that supported community acts while retaining diversity of acts was discussed. What this would look like was, as yet, unclear.

It was proposed by Cllr Medhurst and seconded by Cllr Malvern and it was

**RESOLVED  
30700**

to set up a Working Party to provide options for developing Sunny Saturday's in the future.

The Sunny Saturdays Working Party would include Cllrs Callender, Cunnington, Fraser and Medhurst initially.

**ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER**

**THEATRE IN THE PARK (Agenda Item 8)**

Members of the Committee expressed their enjoyment of this event. It was noted that Shakespeare doesn't appeal to everyone, even with the work taken to make it more accessible. The Committee would welcome plays in modern English but recognises that rights can be a challenge. The sword fighting was very well received.

It was suggested that if doing Shakespeare then a comedy would be easier, that short scenes from multiple Shakespeare plays worked very well in the past and to consider something like a short Q&A or explanatory session at the end to help the children understand what they just saw.

The Committee remain concerned that this event is not as good value for money as other events it runs and would like to see greater attendance. The lack of

CHAIR'S INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



microphones for the actors was noted for the latter performance and it was highlighted that these are necessary.

**RESOLVED  
30701**

It was proposed by Cllr Malvern and seconded by Cllr Medhurst and it was

to continue Theatre in the Park, extending the contract with Bart Lee Theatre for a further year and requesting from F&P a budget increase in line with inflation.

**ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER**

There remains a question regarding the tech trailer. The Committee were of mixed opinions, however it was suggested that Wokingham Men's Shed might be able to help.

**QUESTION REGARDING PARTY IN THE PARK (Agenda Item 9)**

A question from a Councillor was received that was quickly identified as being complex enough to warrant a report to assist the Committee with answering it.

*“Some of our most worthwhile local charities are struggling financially. Within the context of the significant reduction in contributions to Charities after COVID and during the on-going Cost of Living Crisis, would the A&C Committee agree to alter the “Party in the Park” event to be the “Charity Party in the Park” event? This could include the Mayor’s charity being the nominated charity for that year’s event, with money collected during the event going to the Mayor’s nominated charity.”*

The Committee was in broad agreement with the report which highlighted the complexity around the request both from a logistical and legislative standpoint. They were in agreement that the event should not become a charitable event. But should the Mayor’s Charity be in a position to do so, they would be allowed to raise awareness and have donation options at the event. It would only be the Mayor’s Charity, and there would not be any allocation of this events budget to facilitate a charitable collection. Officer time would be monitored and be in line with any other charitable endeavour by the Mayor’s Charity.

**RESOLVED  
30702**

It was proposed by Cllr Callender and seconded by Cllr Domingue and it was

to allow only the Mayor’s Charity an opportunity for promotion at the Party in the Park.

**RESOLVED  
30703**

It was proposed by Cllr Cunnington and seconded by Cllr Callender and it was

that the Committee would not rebrand the Party in the Park to become a charitable fundraising event.

**FUTURE EVENTS (Agenda Item 10)**

A number of potential options were discussed. The following have been requested to look at in .

Human Library. A global project that encourages people with particular and often marginalised experience to be available to talk on those experiences to others.

CHAIR’S INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



Recycled Sculpture project that potentially ties into a sustainable fashion show.

**ACTION ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER**

It was also noted to revisit the following from the events for consideration list with new information.

Graffiti boards – rather than a permanent option, look to Southend City Jam and how they used temporary boards over a bank holiday weekend.

Get in touch with Places for Leisure about Carnival Hub to put more thought into a battle of the bands/community music event. Which might tie into the ongoing work around Sunny Saturdays.

**ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER**

Cllr Domingue has a contact that might be able to offer experienced advice on a themed Fun Run. Cllr Domingue to make introductions if applicable.

**ACTION: CLLR DOMINGUE**

It was noted that in addition to the above ideas the Committee had no projects that were dance or photography orientated.

Additionally in connection to the Human Library project there was scope with the ongoing museum work around oral histories of residents. The Arts and Culture Officer would talk to the Civic Officer on this due to history being under Civic's purview.

**COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 11)**

- a) Cllr Fumagalli updated the Committee on the progress for Science with Schools. We have speakers from Syngenta and Kew Gardens with a focus around food security.
- b) When appropriate we may wish to share in marketing that Theatre in the Park is being renewed for another year.

**CHAIR**

CHAIR'S INITIALS \_\_\_\_\_



**Monitoring Report: Arts & Culture**

**Date: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

<b>Date Action Agreed</b>	<b>Item for Action (to include any resolution number)</b>	<b>Person Actioning</b>	<b>Proposed Completion Date</b>	<b>Progress</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Amendments to the Committee projects and events document	Arts and Culture Committee	March 2024	Noted Decorated Cabinets already in the document. Will work on in slow time to make changes and in response to any strategic changes from the Council.
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023	Future Lunar New Years	Arts and Culture Officer	Feb 2024	Agenda Item: 12.

04/10/2023

## Wokingham Town Council

Page 1

12:02

## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 30/09/2023

Month No: 6

## Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available
<u>304 Arts &amp; Culture</u>						
1159 Book Festival Income	2,731	1,800	3,600	1,800		
1253 Fun Day Income	230	520	200	(320)		
1266 Board games income	248	0	1,000	1,000		
<b>Arts &amp; Culture :- Income</b>	<b>3,209</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>4,800</b>	<b>2,480</b>		
4341 Concert	53,251	80,673	60,000	(20,673)	48,319	(68,992)
4343 PRS Licence	0	0	600	600		600
4345 Book Festival	5,073	986	7,800	6,814	5,679	1,135
4388 Theatre in the Park	2,500	3,551	3,750	199	150	49
4389 Board Games event	198	0	1,000	1,000		1,000
4512 Sunny Saturdays	3,093	1,695	3,000	1,305		1,305
4513 Dressing the Christmas Tree	1,527	0	1,350	1,350	1,497	(147)
4518 Living Advent Calendar	350	0	0	0		0
4526 International Day	4,055	0	3,000	3,000		3,000
4527 Chalk about it	2,783	3,725	4,050	325	1,313	(988)
4528 Murals	6,503	0	0	0		0
4603 Fun Day	6,944	13,372	14,600	1,228	520	708
4608 Virtual Museum Upgrade	0	4,439	4,500	61		61
<b>Arts &amp; Culture :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>86,277</b>	<b>108,441</b>	<b>103,650</b>	<b>(4,791)</b>	<b>57,478</b>	<b>(62,269)</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(83,068)</b>	<b>(106,121)</b>	<b>(98,850)</b>	<b>7,271</b>		
Grand Totals:- Income	3,209	2,320	4,800	2,480		
Expenditure	86,277	108,441	103,650	(4,791)	57,478	(62,269)
<b>Net Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>(83,068)</b>	<b>(106,121)</b>	<b>(98,850)</b>	<b>7,271</b>		
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>(83,068)</b>	<b>(106,121)</b>				





# Wokingham Town Council

## A&C Officer's Report 10/2023-24

---

To: Arts and Culture Committee  
Date: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
Subject: Sunny Saturdays Working Party Summary

---

### 1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the outcome of the work looking at Sunny Saturdays through the Working Party and ongoing work by Officer to complement that.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Sunny Saturdays was a series of musical entertainment events on Saturdays outside in the Summer months.
- 2.2 It has changed due to various pressures over the years and needed a serious reevaluation to consider what the Committee wanted it to achieve with this event.
- 2.3 A Working Party was set up to discuss and make suggestions about the event.

### 3 WAY FORWARD

- 3.1 The Working Party meetings in September and October made a number of observations and suggestions.
- 3.2 The primary aim of the event is not to draw people into the Town for it specifically, but to :
- help enliven the atmosphere of the Town to make it the Town a fun place to visit.
  - It should not impede the business of the Town but complement it.
  - It should support primarily local Community acts.
- 3.3 We should aim for diversity with our act choices. However it is recognized that local community acts are not always as diverse as the local population and this desire should be balanced by how achievable it is.
- 3.4 The Working Party would like to aim for as many acts/performance dates as the £3000 budget allows. This is a variable amount due to varying fees for acts and the need for basic infrastructure and other costs.
- 3.5 The two locations that were discussed as possible performance venues were Peach Place and the paved area near/on Elms Field. Both are owned by WBC and managed by Vail Williams. Peach Place is a known venue with minimal infrastructure for events of this type. Officers would suggest sticking to Peach Place.
- 3.6 Staffing challenges remain that cannot be overcome by just Councillor support. Indeed in locations not owned by WTC even Officers can be of limited support due to not having excellent knowledge and full access to a space.
- 3.7 Officers and the Working Party were keen to engage with WBC to see if it is possible to get some support on event days to ensure the smooth running of the event. The Town Clerk investigated further and at this time WBC are not able to support this event.

- 3.8 Challenges remain about the logistical set up of these events without any kind of on the day staff support. It is creating risk to run these events without a central point of contact, support in an emergency and ensuring risks are managed. As well as ensuring the events are properly signed to the Town Council.
- 3.9 Officers will continue to investigate possibilities to mitigate the staffing implications. One method may be to offer overtime. However there is no guarantee of staff taking this up and with cost pressures overtime may come out of the overall cost for this event.
- 3.10 Equally the Working Party are keen to encourage Councillors that this is an event that cannot run without Councillor support. It is anticipated that a Councillor would need to be on site to greet and act as advocate for the act and the event as a whole. They would introduce the acts and ensure that WTC involvement is expressed to the audience. They would also be able to gather informal and formal feedback. Any other Councillor attending would be useful to gather more feedback and observations about how the event went.
- 3.11 The Committee should consider challenges regarding regular performances. The Working Party suggested a window of opportunity between June and September. Recognising that they would not want the event on the same day as other WTC events, and if using Peach Place be mindful of the Children's Theatre group using the Bradbury Centre. Other major Town events should be avoided if at all possible. Avoiding just the first two parameters will mean the events will not be on a regular pattern but considering the core aim of the event this may not be a major issue.
- 3.12 Wet weather remains a risk and one we are not able to fully mitigate. Performances should have a suitable Gazebo and be on hardstanding. Rescheduling of any event would be at the discretion of the Officer, in consultation with the act and bearing in mind the budget available for a reschedule.
- 3.13 The Working Party at this time is not suggesting a rebrand of the event for 2024.
- 3.14 The performance should be appropriately visually branded to WTC. Save the date leaflets would be a useful thing to have available on the day for Councillors to hand out.

#### **4 NEW COUNCIL STRATEGY**

- 4.1 To note that a new Council Strategy has been recently agreed. Work will now occur to align Arts and Culture as a whole within it and will be used to reflect on this event.

#### **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The budget may stretch to up to six events, although this is not guaranteed. However as it wasn't possible last year to properly support three events, Officers would not recommend increasing the number of events.
- 5.2 Otherwise accept the suggestions of the Working Party, with regards to aim and councillor support.
- 5.3 Peach Place as a location
- 5.4 Delegate event dates and staffing implications to the Officer team.
- 5.5 Councillors should consider each year if an event is impactful enough to keep, over adding a new event. The Officer only has so much capacity.

Gemma Cumming  
Arts and Culture Officer



**WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Town Hall, Market Place,**  
**Wokingham**  
**Berkshire**  
**RG40 1AS**

**SUNNY SATURDAYS WORKING PARTY**  
**NOTES OF THE MEETING**  
**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 AT 1pm VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Present:** Cllrs: A Domingue (Chair), B Callender, P Cunnington,

**Apologies:** Cllrs: A Fraser, A Medhurst

**In attendance:** Arts and Culture Officer, Town Clerk

**1. Vote on Chair:**

It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Domingue should chair the Working Party. .

**2. Discussion on Aims and Objectives**

It was recognised that the aims and objectives may be affected by logistical requirements of the event as well as what was possible for the Town Council to deliver.

The history of the event was discussed. In particular around the aim to actively bring people into the Town. It was agreed that this aim was not one Sunny Saturdays had been fulfilling.

On discussion it was agreed that the Working Party felt that Sunny Saturday's best aspect was that it uplifts an area's/the Town's atmosphere with music. It was felt it was not a requirement that it alone brought people into the Town but rather added to the Town ambience.

It was noted that it was not currently adding to the Distinctiveness of the Council due to staffing challenges for a short event on a weekend that made it very difficult to ensure it was properly branded to Wokingham Town Council. It was also possibly not distinctive in its own right due to other musical events in Wokingham operated by other organisations.

It was important that the event was recognisable as a Town Council offering. However as a low key event focusing on ambience further discussion would need to be had on how to marry those concepts and the staffing challenges around them.

This kind of event would support better the local community acts, who tend to be more relaxed about not always being the centre of attention. These are

also a section of acts that aren't currently significantly catered for. The local scene and pubs tend to show smaller professional/upcoming acts.

It was noted that local community acts can lack diversity and while the Officer would be happy to keep diversity an aim it would need to be balanced with how achievable it is.

Draft scope and aim: **To produce a series of events that showcase local community acts to add vibrancy and atmosphere to the Town on Saturdays.**

(this will need revision/ addition as other aspects are discussed and agreed upon)

### **3. Discussion on challenges of the event**

Staffing and logistical support were discussed. The need to ensure there was a Gazebo ready for the acts was noted, as well as a point of contact for the acts and any required logistics as well as proper signposting to the organiser.

On Officer support it was noted that an event of any size has a minimum requirement of support and administration to make happen. Many small events can be significantly more work than one large event. Councillors are asked to keep this in mind when looking at the scope of this project.

The Town Clerk suggested that some push back to the Borough Council, in particular if we chose to continue to use Peach Place, might be warranted to see if they could take some responsibility for the on the day logistics. As part of the new Town Centre strategy. Councillors would still need to attend and would be key in getting feedback on the events.

**Action: Town Clerk**

It was felt that the aim of the event predisposed the project to a series of events over a period. The number and frequency of regular events would need to be discussed more thoroughly to ensure it is achievable.

A location was also noted as warranting further discussion. The location should help achieve the aim of the event. Councillors were reminded that spaces WTC own/manage are the easiest to get a project underway on. Other spaces would require permission as well as significant logistical discussions to understand what was possible in any given space. There were minimum logistical requirements for a space for it to be usable for this event.

Getting feedback was also discussed. It was noted that there was an opportunity to gather feedback in the run up to the Annual Town Meeting. Councillors would be encouraged to take up this opportunity. Note this may be too late to inform a 2024 event but would be very useful for the future.

### **4. Consider the Immediate future of the event.**

It was noted that at this point we don't have enough information to make a full recommendation to the Arts and Culture Committee on a direction for this event. It was important that the event in the round be considered alongside how achievable any changes would be to improve the event. Aims and what's actually possible do not always go hand in hand.

It was noted that there was a time crunch if Councillors wished to aim for an event with the new aims and objectives ready for 2024. A decision would need to be reached at the next A&C meeting in early November.

It was agreed to have a further meeting in a few weeks to consider:

- Time of year, how many and how regular the events would be
- Where the events would be
- Wet weather challenges
- Staffing challenges
- A rebrand was also discussed. This was noted as major undertaking
- Marketing of the event should also be looked at, as well as gathering feedback.

For information the budget for this event is £3000. It was not all spent this year so a concise plan for 2024 would be recommended to ensure there is a case to maintain that budget.

**Action: Arts and Culture Officer**

**5. AOB –** There was no AOB

**6. Next Meeting**

The Working Party agreed meet approx. in two weeks. 1pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October was suggested as an initial date and was put in diaries. (subject to input from members of the Working Party who were unable to attend)

**The meeting closed at 2.05pm**



**WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Town Hall, Market Place,**  
**Wokingham**  
**Berkshire**  
**RG40 1AS**

**SUNNY SATURDAYS WORKING PARTY**  
**NOTES OF THE MEETING**  
**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 AT 1pm VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Present:** Cllrs: B Callender, P Cunnington

**Apologies:** Cllrs: A Fraser, A Medhurst, A Domingue, Town Clerk

**In attendance:** Arts and Culture Officer

**1. Preferred Venue:**

Two venues were discussed. Peach Place and the paved area in Elms Field. The Arts and Culture Officer noted that both were owned by WBC and managed by Vail Williams. It was uncertain if the Elms Field area had power that could be utilised for performance acts but may suit any acts that are larger (performers or volume). Peach Place had space restrictions and also had neighbours to consider. It was also possibly still geared for performances but we would need more information from WBC who had not replied to the Town Clerk as of yet. It was agreed to leave both as options. But it was recognised that a regular location was also important.

**2. Time of year and regularity**

The maximum number of performances as per the existing budget was estimated at 6. Recognising that costs of acts would fluctuate and that if WBC were able to support the event through a cover we would not need to hire a gazebo for the bands. It was recognised that the aims and objectives may be affected by logistical requirements of the event as well as what was possible for the Town Council to deliver.

The time frame would be June to end of September. If using Peach Place we would want to avoid the final performance date of the Children's Theatre group. Regardless of location we would also want to avoid other Town Council events. If possible also avoid other major town events. But this may prove challenging for a regular performance. Current thinking is two a month June, July and August. September if needed.

**3. Wet Weather**

It was recognised that there was very little we could do about the weather conditions. We would aim to put events in the most commonly driest months. They would be covered and on hardstanding. This is the limit of possible

mitigation. Extremes of weather such as very heavy rain, thunderstorm and strong winds are the primary culprits for stopping this event with these mitigations. These should be rare occurrences.

**4. Staffing Challenges**

It was recognised that this section would need the Town Clerk to weigh in. In locations that we do not manage even Officers have limited scope to resolve problems or emergencies. We would request further liaison with WBC/ Vail Williams on who manages the space on a Saturday. If there was potential to work in partnership by WBC supporting the event with a gazebo and site control we would like to explore that.

Councillors offered that they should be on site to greet and introduce the band and be aware of the event plan. Gather feedback from attendees and make sure attendees know about upcoming events. Cllrs indicated that support via the Chair of Arts and Culture would be possible to encourage Cllr support. It was acknowledged that they weren't in a position to run with full oversight an event. That should be an Officer or properly trained external individual/organisation.

**5. Marketing and Branding**

It did not feel necessary at this time to suggest a full rebranding of the event. The performances should be signposted to ensure attendees are aware of who is putting them on. If at all possible, a banner to be attached to the Gazebo that indicates this. Feather flags are already available if it is safe to put them in the flower bed using the spike attachment. Councillors should in the introduction acknowledge who has organised the event. Look to have at least a flyer of upcoming WTC events also available.

Advance publicity as usual.

**6. Aims and Objectives**

Confirmed as per the notes of the last Working Party with no changes.

**7. Recommendations to take to A&C**

A report will be written to distil the discussion of the last two Working Party meetings. With a hope to have more input from WBC on potential partnership, as this will effect the planning. And further feedback from the Town Clerk.

**8. AOB**

No AOB

**9. Date of next meeting.**

Next meeting suggested to be held post the A&C meeting.

Arts and Culture Officer to suggest a date and time.

Discussion to include necessity of further meetings of the Working Party.

**The meeting closed at 2.07pm**



# Wokingham Town Council

## A&C Officer's Report 7/2023-24

---

To: Arts and Culture Committee

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Subject: Chalk About it project

---

### 1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the execution of the Chalk About It project

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This event came from an Australian community led project that uses drawing on the pavement to destigmatize talking about mental health. From that concept the Committee agreed on an event that brought in professional artists to both create a core piece and facilitate engagement with the public.
- 2.2 This is the third year of the event and the final in the current contract. It took place on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2023.
- 2.3 The primary target audience was identified as individuals who's cultural or ethnic background might discourage talking freely and without stigma about mental health. These may be men (young men in particular) and non-white ethnic groups. With the aim to have a relaxed option to start the conversation about expressing oneself. With resources from local mental health groups to know what is available and where to go for it.
- 2.4 It was however recognized that this concept includes any local resident, as mental health affects all of us.
- 2.5 It feeds into the key strategic aims of inclusivity through the focus on mental health. It also feeds into our distinctiveness as we are unaware of any other local event like it.

### 3 THE EVENT

- 3.1 We worked with Urban Canvas and local mental health organizations to refine the event. Both types of organizations were very useful to create an event that would start the discussion on mental health in an accessible and sensitive way.
- 3.2 It was recognized that how the event was presented would impact those who would attend. There were significant discussions on tone and approach, so as to try to make it an event that would be attractive to those individuals we most wanted to target. After a number of years of doing it we have moved from a softly, softly approach to a more open approach, particularly on the day. Feedback from past years and our experience putting on this event has encouraged us to talk more openly about the purpose of the event.
- 3.3 This year it was even more difficult to bring the mental health organisations onto site. On the other hand we have a larger pool of options of orgs that can add to the event. Many of the past providers cited difficulty being able to staff this event. Additionally from speed of responses both on the run up and regarding feedback on the event it's clear that there are challenges with capacity and resource for them.



- 3.4 We did have commitment from ARC and Kaleidoscopic. Mindset Unlimited, also joined us as a company with similar aims and with their wellbeing festival on Elms Field coming up in September.
- 3.5 A number of the mental health organisations who couldn't make it, expressed an inclination to attend in future years. But due to service pressures and staff pressures were currently unable to. We have queried if the time of year was creating a barrier but have had no indication that Summer Holidays is creating any more of a barrier than any other time of year.
- 3.6 The Artists and the Mental Health Orgs attending fed back to let us know that they had had a number of disclosures and increased conversation and feedback from participants about mental health. The Artists (who do not have a background in mental health work) have also noted that their experience is helping inform them about mental health, be able to confidently collaborate on other events like this one and interact with participants with mental health challenges more appropriately and with confidence.
- 3.7 As the event is sensitive in nature and has limited capacity we have been targeted with how we market it. Each year seeing how it responds to being marketed in a more open fashion. Again we utilized the connections and expertise of the mental health groups to spread word of the event. We also used flyers, press releases, banners and social media to let the general public know about the event. We increased information signage at the event.
- 3.8 The event was well attended. It was slightly quieter than originally anticipated however this may well be due to the England Ladies football final that landed on the same day. Regardless we quickly filled up the individual artwork areas and later the collaborative area.
- 3.9 There was a mix of people attending from families to solo adults. The bulk of attendees remains the young families. However this is a significant demographic in Wokingham and one often looking to attend open events.
- 3.10 We continue to encourage all ages to get involved. With options for those not able to get on the ground to chalk as well as an active encouragement for the adults to join in. There was an increased number of adults chalking at all times and this may have contributed to other adults getting involved. It was much easier to persuade the adults to join in this year.
- 3.11 We also ensure that the event is well documented. This event, maybe more than any other, has a significant impact online post the event. When considering how many people this event has served, do consider the 12K post reach of the post event photos. This reach was due to the 8 shares including a share into a local Facebook group that also generated positive conversation. The sharing of the project should also feed into it's aims to destigmatize talking about mental health.

#### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND OTHER COSTS**

- 4.1 Of the £4,050 budget approx. £4,020 was spent.
- 4.2 We were able to borrow barriers and fencing from Volker which are compliant for the visually impaired.
- 4.3 We had support from Councillors to ensure the event went smoothly. Due to the amount of provision this was a vital requirement, to ensure each area had constant cover.
- 4.4 This event has reached the end of a three year contract so will be going back out for quote if it is continued next year.
- 4.5 Officers would request a minimum increase inline with inflation of 6.7% to manage inflationary pressures on the event.

#### **5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 To request an increase for the budget to ease inflationary pressures.

Gemma Cumming  
Arts & Culture Officer



# Wokingham Town Council

## A&C Officer's Report 8/2023-24

---

To: Arts and Culture Committee

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Subject: Science with Schools

---

### 1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the outcomes of the Science with Schools event that took place in September 2023.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This event was envisioned to be a brokerage project to engage schools with universities and industry, and expand knowledge on the range of STEM based careers there are. To frame STEM subjects wider than secondary learning and to engage with specialists who can bring a new light onto STEM subject matter.
- 2.2 The Holt and St Crispin's again took up the offer.

### 3 THE EVENT

- 3.1 There were no ongoing costs associated to this event.
- 3.2 As per last year the Arts and Culture Officer liaised with the schools and Cllr Fumagalli to set up and run the event.
- 3.3 It remains challenging to find a time that suits all schools. Schools stick to a set timetable and can't easily disrupt that. Both schools prefer to have this event during a normal science lesson and we continue to be fortunate that the attending schools have at least one time in the week when they both have science at broadly the same time. Even so the timetables do not perfectly align so sessions are not the full hour.
- 3.4 The Holt and St Crispin's were involved and in early conversations talked about options for best dates and times. They were also involved in discussing what topics might be of most interest to their students. This year food security was one of the suggested topics alongside a desire for examples on where the speakers work directly connects to the Curriculum.
- 3.5 Cllr Fumagalli again organized the speakers. Speakers this year were connected to food security and came via Syngenta and Kew Gardens.
  - Sian Deller is a research scientist working for the agrochemical company Syngenta. Syngenta makes the seeds farmers sow and the crop protection products farmers use on their crops. Sian studies fungi that cause diseases on crop plants and help find ways to stop these pathogens damaging food production. Sian will talk about the steps involved in getting food to people, and the science that is helping us achieve food security in the face of pests, pathogens and weeds.
  - Caspar Chater is a scientist at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He researches how crop plants respond to drought and other environmental stresses caused by global change. He

also works with World Forest ID to try to reduce farming's impact on deforestation worldwide, particularly soybeans and cocoa. He will be introducing some of his projects to improve sustainable agriculture and food security under climate change.

#### **4 FEEDBACK**

- 4.1 The event was well received by all. Schools were very grateful for the opportunity.
- 4.2 The digital session continues works best for the majority involved, saving time and coordination to be able to stream into the classrooms and increasing choice in speaker.
- 4.3 It remains very difficult to coordinate a session between multiple secondary schools. We have experienced this not only with Science with Schools but also with other events like the Book Festival. The schools did not agree a date until well into the summer holidays. A date decision that late can have an impact in agreeing speakers.
- 4.4 Cllr Fumagalli continues to take on the task of sourcing speakers. Previous years we have requested other Councillors offer possible contacts for future events. This event is predicated on the support of a singular Councillor. The Arts and Culture Officer does not have the contacts, or understanding of the Science industry to easily source options, and is low on time to take on a task that would be so outside their experience.

#### **5 KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE COUNCIL**

##### **5.1 Distinctiveness:**

- 5.1.1 The only event of its kind in the Town that we are aware of. It has potential to be expanded to other schools although this may be challenging.

##### **5.2 Inclusivity:**

- 5.2.1 This event aims to include (and commonly achieves) a variety of speakers, across gender and ethnicity. It remains important to maintain diversity within this event. Two speakers makes this more challenging, we weren't ethnically diverse this year (to the Officers belief).
- 5.2.2 It could in the future look at scientific studies relating to areas that feed into our definition of inclusivity. One aim being to encourage female students into STEM fields.
- 5.2.3 The digital offer has the potential to reach students across the Town without having to travel, and include STEM based academics and industries around the country. However balancing this, using organizations that are local or well known does tend to make the session more grounded for the students.

#### **6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 We look to maintain this as a digital offer
- 6.2 Consider if the Committee wish to suggest a focus for a future year that feeds into one of the key principles. Or remain content to leave that organizational level to the Officer in conversation with the schools.
- 6.3 More input from Councillors including any that could offer support or contacts for finding future speakers.

Gemma Cumming  
Arts & Culture Officer



# Wokingham Town Council

## A&C Officer's Report 9/2023-24

---

To: Arts and Culture Committee

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Subject: New event investigations

---

### 1 REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the results of investigations into new and previously considered events.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee suggested a number of potential avenues of investigation for events including:

- Human Library
- Recycled Sculpture project / sustainable fashion show.
- Graffiti boards for a temporary event
- Using Carnival Hub for events. In particular, the battle of the bands concept.

### 3 HUMAN LIBRARY

- 3.1 The Arts and Culture Officer liaised directly with the Human Library project in Copenhagen.
- 3.2 The Human Library is a worldwide organization with a trademarked brand. It would not be possible to brand anything Human Library that wasn't working with them.
- 3.3 They indicate due to high interest in their project that there is a waiting period for agreeing new publishing partners. Currently around 6 months.
- 3.4 The participants (called Books in all instances) are volunteers although all expenses would need to be paid for by the organizer of the event (us).
- 3.5 There is a licence fee of \$250 that enables usage of their brand and their expertise to guide and train us to put on an event.. This is valid for a year and covers a single event. Without committing to this cost it was difficult to find out more about what they offer.
- 3.6 We would be responsible for sourcing 'Books' in our local area and encouraging them to sign up to the Human Library project. The nearest 'books' that may be available (no 'books' are required to attend events) are in London.
- 3.7 They were not able to confirm what sort of participants might be available making any preliminary themed event ideas (for example a session themed around Black History Month) impossible to progress further.
- 3.8 Without committing to the licence fee it was also not possible to find out enough to consider what venue or set up would be best for this kind of event.

- 3.9 There is a high level interest from multiple avenues within Wokingham Borough Council. Enough that a partnership with WBC may be possible. The majority of Human Library events in the UK have been via libraries and higher educational establishments. It may be that this is a route for this concept.
- 3.10 Due to the paywall to more information and a known waiting time there is limited information to budget appropriately for this concept. The Officer is concerned about the requirement to source participants ourselves, which is a time consuming, delicate and challenging prospect. There may be alternative routes to have events of this ilk, and before committing to anything see what possibilities there are for partnership work.

#### **4 RECYCLED SCULPTURE WORKSHOPS/SUSTAINABLE FASHION SHOW**

- 4.1 The Arts and Culture Officer was making enquiries into this concept. Of the two, the recycled sculpture workshop is the easier to budget, plan for and make happen.
- 4.2 The Officer would suggest an inside workshop on a weekday during a school holidays. Either drop in or prebooked. The children would assist with making a sculpture on a pre agreed theme using recycled materials.
- 4.3 It would be best as an inside activity to minimise weather disruption and offer facilities for the children. Weekends are fully booked in the Town Hall with existing events and weddings. Although further thought would need to be made on ensuring the activity doesn't damage the space.
- 4.4 We have been quoted £475 for a day (5 hours) for a professional workshop leader to make the sculpture with the children and offer a small make and take activity for them. Materials are included. We would need to offer some staff or Councillor support on the day.
- 4.5 Other budgetary considerations would be predominantly marketing. £1000 should cover this event and we could request a small participation fee or donation to aim towards subsidizing the cost to the Council.
- 4.6 Further consideration would need to be made on what happens to the sculpture after the event.
- 4.7 The sustainable fashion show is a wonderful idea however it is functionally more of a challenge to make happen.
- 4.8 Town Mayors have put on fashion shows as part of their fundraising for their Mayor's Charity so some members of staff have some knowledge of putting these kind of events on. However these events benefit hugely from organisations that supply the fashion and the models and sometimes the infrastructure. Their money is made selling the fashion to attendees and charitable donations are created by ticketing the event.
- 4.9 There are significant questions around who both the audience and the participants for such an event would be. Currently the only way the Officer can see it working is with significant buy in from schools and/or colleges who are doing relevant subjects. Who can commit to sending students to participate. Students who have the interest, skill and time to be involved.
- 4.10 Without this known interest it's a challenge to budget. Your audience would be expected to be friends and family of the students. So there are less opportunities for ticketing to offset the costs. We would need to budget for each designer to buy clothes in local charity shops, and we would need some publicity and comms budget (if only to make a record of the event) and most significantly some sort of staging/catwalk.
- 4.11 Considering that the Main Hall with a catwalk may only host between 60 and 80 people there is limited scope for the message to travel beyond the audience. Using Carnival Hub, which could host 400 may have more possibilities, but the hall comes with an as yet unknown cost attached.
- 4.12 Cost vs impact should be considered for both these events. At this point the Officer would suggest more time is spent investigating and refining ideas, and forging partnerships especially with the sustainable fashion show.

## **5 GRAFFITI BOARDS FOR A TEMPORARY EVENT**

- 5.1 The Arts and Culture Officer contacted Southend City Jam for any wisdom they could share. There has not been any response.
- 5.2 Southend City Jam is “Europe’s Largest Street Art Festival” with a long history of Street Art in Southend since the 1980’s and a significant tourist focus for the city. It has partners with expertise in both street art and the infrastructure needed to prepare a space for such an event
- 5.3 There is significant professional support offered as sponsorship or partnership (the bounds of which are unclear) in order to create the temporary structures.
- 5.4 Any similar event in Wokingham would require buy in from local street artists to bring artists to the space. There would need to be further consideration of what other support both professional and volunteer would be needed to support such an event. First aid, security and marshalling etc.
- 5.5 One of the biggest pluses for the Southend event is the festival vibe that is achieved by also adding in stalls, street food and activities that make it more hands on and exciting than watching the artists paint. This adds significant infrastructure needs, costs and staffing requirements to make the event work.
- 5.6 Approvals and risk assessments would need to be made for such an event even on our own spaces. Even a cut down version will face a baseline series of challenges to make it possible.
- 5.7 While it makes sense to have the event over a long weekend, there are no bank holiday weekends during the May to September period without significant local events already planned.
- 5.8 It was also discussed to do this over multiple sites. This would exponentially increase staffing requirements. This scale of event would need to be run entirely by an external provider in the style of the Party in the Park. As it stands with the information available, Wokingham Town Council does not have sufficient resources to operate such an event.

## **6 CARNIVAL HUB**

- 6.1 Having seen the space in use for the Book Festival there are possibilities in using it for various functions. The Arts and Culture Officer will be looking for more feedback from the Library service when debriefing for the Book festival next month.
- 6.2 The Town Clerk is also investigating Carnival Hub as an option. But has yet received any firm information on cost and potential. We will continue to investigate possibilities for the space.

## **7 FURTHER THOUGHTS**

- 7.1 The current complement of activities by the Arts and Culture Committee is strong. Workload is at its peak although investigation is being undertaken to try to free up time or reduce pinch points.
- 7.2 It should also be noted that outside of what the Committee sees is the ongoing joint working with the Civic Officer on the Wokingham Museum (both virtual and physical though museum open days).

Gemma Cumming  
Arts and Culture Officer



# Wokingham Town Council

## Memorandum

---

To: Arts and Culture Committee

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Re: Reminder of funds already requested and potentially to be requested from F&P

From: Arts and Culture Officer

---

Due to the challenging period of economic upheaval and the benefit of renewing contracts for existing services as soon as they come up a number of Arts and Culture events and activities have already requested uplifts to their budgets for 2024-25. Making the usual process of reflecting on budgets a more prolonged process than usual.

The below is a reminder of what has already been requested. This is to be used as an aide memoir for the Committee when considering any final requests for the next financial year:

Event	Increase requested	Status
Party in the Park (304/4341)	£7245	Agreed by F&P
Fun Day (304/4603)	£3500	Agreed by F&P
Theatre in the Park (304/4388)	Inflationary increase at 6.7%	Requested by A&C, to be received by F&P
Chalk About It (304/4527)	Inflationary increase at 6.7%	To be discussed by A&C
Any new event		To be discussed by A&C

### Lunar New Year

The Committee are reminded that they will need to resolve on if they wish for Lunar New Year (304/4526) to become a recurring event at £9,800 total a year



Wokingham Town Council

Vision 2023 to 2027



## **Mission statement:**

*Wokingham Town Council embraces our past, celebrates our present and builds for our future.*

## **Principles:**

### **Being sustainable**

Working to reduce our negative impact on our local environment and use our financial resources and physical assets as efficiently and effectively as possible.

### **Involving everyone**

Striving to ensure the council's events, activities and democratic processes are open, accessible and welcoming to everyone in our community.

### **Fostering Town Pride**

Protecting, enhancing and celebrating what's good about our council, our community, our town and our heritage. We will learn from our past, acknowledge where there's room for improvement, and prepare for the future.

### **Enriching community**

Creating and supporting opportunities to bring our community together and help it to thrive.

The following items were thoughts or suggestions on what is important to residents and what is important to councillors.

Following an initial thought gathering process, they were voted for or against by Strategy Working Party members.

They have been included to act as ideas for the committees to consider how the council's vision might look to embedded into the work of the committees.

### Fostering Town Pride

1	Lobby the borough council for a better Wokingham	+
2	The Council should ensure we maintain and promote things about Wokingham of which we are proud	+
3	Make sure we celebrate or make reconciliation for Wokingham's rich history	
4	Letting people know what we do	+
5	Acknowledge there's room for improvement	
6	Love Wokingham (Marketing)	
7	Make sure we look after the town and its services, that things "run well"	+
8	Be unique – different to Reading and Bracknell	

### Being Sustainable

1	Thinking about the future as well as the present	+
2	Council should make sure we're accountable to the residents – data, impact, outcome and experience	+
3	Offering value for money	+
4	Engage with local organisations and charities	
5	Could take on some other town parks from Wokingham (Borough Council)	+
6	Use residents' money effectively and efficiently	+
7	Take on local bins from WBC	* *
8	Taxes being kept at an affordable rate	+

### Involving everyone

1	Our residents being more involved via questionnaires	+
2	Local business awards	
3	Public toilets	
4	Have a variety of events and activities that are open to all	+++
5	Involve other marginal communities	++
6	Make sure we are welcoming to everyone, no matter our background or views	+++
7	Particularly Youth, Elderly, Lonely, Marginalised	
8	Care about them no matter who they are	+
9	Youth engagement	+
10	Bus services	* *

### Enriching Community

1	Support / encourage local people and organisations to start local events	++
2	Act together for their good	

3	PCSO funding	*
4	Leverage our assets	
5	Local stories – museum of the community	
6	Free use of one asset to grant recipients	
7	Living benches	
8	Residents want to feel safe	+
9	Councillor mentor / buddying system	
10	Support those who support others	+
11	Real sense of community	++
12	To reach out to our residents	
13	Safe and welcoming to visitors	+
14	Events in other areas (e.g. one per ward)	++