

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE HERITAGE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE BLAKEHAY THEATRE ON 5th MARCH 2019**

Meeting Commenced: 10:07 am

Meeting Concluded: 12:40 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Crockford-Hawley (Chairman), Jan Holloway, Peter Mcaleer and David Hitchins (S), Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Matt Hardy (Visitor Services Manager), Sally Heath (Theatre Manager), Becky Walsh (Communications Officer), Michele Green and Amal Khreishah (South West Heritage Trust), Richard Blows (Transformation Programme Manager Corporate Services), Fiona Matthews (Theatre Orchard).

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Sonia Russe

367	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrissey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
368	<p>Declarations of interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
369	<p>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 30th January 2020</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway SECONDED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman</p>
370	<p>Budget for 2020/2021</p> <p>A detailed income and expenditure report had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk highlighted that live shows at the Blakehay had been going well, with increased income. The last couple of live shows had broken even. The income on the bar was improving as a result of the live shows, though was still not where it should be.</p> <p>The Museum café was producing a 93% income against a 98% expenditure. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that this close margin was desired, and the result of fantastic work from the Café Supervisor. The Museum functions were producing a 136% income against 70.3% expenditure. It was noted that the new function room at the Museum would help this further.</p>

367	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrisey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
371	<p>Marketing Report</p> <p>The report of the Communications Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Communications Officer explained that for marketing to work it was integral to understand the local community and voice which had been the focus so far. Understanding the Museum audience was more difficult than for the theatre, as Google Analytics could not be used on the Museum website. As a result of this understanding, two new strategies had been created, recognising where efforts should be focused.</p> <p>The Chairman wanted to understand why certain types of marketing were not working at the theatre or Museum. It was advised that radio adverts did not work and that interviews were more effective as they could be more personal and passionate. The Visit Weston marketing had not been working as hoped for at the Blakehay and the Museum and the Communications Officer had been working with the Tourism and Marketing Officer to address this.</p> <p>A quarter of the Museum's marketing budget was spent on the Visit Weston marketing package. The Chairman questioned whether this was the best use of the budget if the marketing had not been converted into custom for the facilities. It was reminded that the Town Council had always aimed to market all of its services together and that the use of Visit Weston for marketing was the result of a Council resolution, and was not down to officers.</p> <p>The Chairman asked for clarification on how much was spent on a Visit Weston marketing package, to which it was clarified that a 20% discount had been applied to the previous years' figure, taking it from £700 to £560. The Theatre Manager reported that 6% of the marketing budget for the theatre was spent on a Visit Weston package, with a 0.27% conversion rate on ticket sales.</p> <p>The Museum Visitor Services Manager reported that it had been estimated that the money spent on the package compared to the number of people the marketing reached, was £30-£40 per person.</p> <p>Both Managers agreed that whilst the current package was not providing results, they wanted to continue working with Visit Weston.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk advised that Visit Weston was now working with Pear Communications, who would assist Visit Weston in advertising along the M5 corridor in service stations. Changes were being made to the</p>

367	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrisey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
	<p>service, and it was suggested that the Visit Weston marketing package be reviewed over the next year.</p> <p>The Communications Officer explained the benefits of the motorway advertising, as it was in a digital format, so could be used to advertise things last minute and did not have to be stagnant marketing.</p> <p>The Town Clerk explained that a 20% discount had been offered as a compromise, as a result of an agreement between managers.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Visit Somerset membership could be better spent, such as through radio stations with a bigger reach. It was also noted that it would be better to focus on areas such as Taunton and Burnham-On-Sea, as opposed to Bristol.</p> <p>The Chairman wanted managers to be totally honest with their reports moving forward. The Communications Officer explained that the strategies were living documents, and would be updated throughout the year. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested reviewing the strategies at the 6-month point, as opposed to reviewing progress at each meeting.</p> <p>Richard Blows enquired whether the Town Council and North Somerset Council had considered consolidating websites to share information.</p> <p>It was advised by the Communications Officer that consolidating two large websites would make it unstable, big and confusing and should be avoided. The Town Council website was undergoing changes as a result of new legislation. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that Visit Weston's aim was destination marketing, and was never intended to do 'in resort' marketing for all community and other events in the town, so anything they could do was a bonus.</p> <p>It was further acknowledged by the Deputy Town Clerk and Richard Blows that 'What's on in Weston' was still a problem. This had been identified in initial partnering works some years back that there was not one recognisable to go to find out what was happening in the town.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Town Council websites should be user tested. The Chairman asked that officers met to collaborate.</p> <p>Fiona Matthews informed that that was what Culture Weston aimed to do for Culture.</p> <p><i>Amal left the meeting at 10:36 am</i></p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley</p>

367	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrisey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
	<p>SECONDED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the marketing strategies for the Blakehay Theatre and Weston Museum be approved for the year 2020/2021 with a 6-month review point and reported back to committee in September 2020.</p>
372	<p>Weston Museum Management Report</p> <p>The report of the Museum Visitor Services Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The Visitor Services Manager reported that the new temporary exhibition had been opened on the 14th February 2020, working in collaboration with Cara MacMahon, the North Somerset Council Heritage Action Zone Officer.</p> <p>Three schools had been funded to visit the Museum for experience days, which included a funded learning session, lunch from Clara's Café and a souvenir from the shop.</p> <p><i>Amal reentered the meeting at 10:38 am</i></p> <p>Members were asked to consider the closure of Weston Museum on the weekend of Weston's Air Festival the 27th-28th of June 2020. This was to accommodate a presence on the beach lawns to further promote Weston Museum and reach footfall in a different way. In previous years, footfall at the Museum during Air Festival was low. It was clarified that a decision could be made on the day to relocate back to the Museum if weather was poor or attendance on the beach lawns was low.</p> <p>Debate ensued. The Museum had a stall on the beach lawns in previous years and there was a high level of interaction. It was queried how this might have a positive impact on footfall long term. Discount vouchers could be used to track the number of people visiting the Museum as a result of the exposure at the Air Festival. It was suggested that the Blakehay Theatre could have a stall as well, as it would be a good marketing opportunity. It was queried whether the closure could have a negative impact on potential Museum visitors that weekend, including those who may visit the café. In response, it was thought that people would walk past many cafés before reaching the Museum, so a negative impact would be unlikely.</p> <p>It was suggested that councillors should be encouraged to hand out leaflets and help promote Town Council services during the Air Festival.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway SECONDED BY: Councillor David Hitchins</p>

<p>367</p>	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrisey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
	<p>RESOLVED: That Weston Museum be closed 27th-28th June 2020 for Air Festival, with a management decision permitted on the day to go back to the Museum if conditions affected the Festival.</p> <p>A member queried what Makaton training was. It was explained that this was a Council wide initiative, training staff in a type of sign language used by people of all ages.</p> <p>The Chairman offered congratulations for the Museum’s award win.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>373</p>	<p>Blakehay Theatre Management Report</p> <p>The report of the Theatre Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was noted that the current format of live shows had been running for two years, providing a good opportunity for analytics. Using this information, the Blakehay Theatre could market smarter and programme the right shows.</p> <p>It was queried whether the bought in shows had achieved a bigger audience and bigger spend on the bar. The Theatre Manager confirmed that bought in shows had a better outcome on visitor numbers and bar takings than cheaper shows such as comedy, drama and dance. It was suggested that quality over quantity was the new approach to programmed shows.</p> <p>Clarification of the audience location was requested which was highlighted within the report at Nailsea to Bristol. It was confirmed that very few people from Weston visited the theatre, noting that people also visited from Bridgwater and Taunton. The Theatre Manager advised that this was the audience that would now be targeted through marketing. Members discussed how the community in Weston did not understand what was on offer in Weston.</p> <p>The Communications Officer reported that different parts of the community would be targeted through marketing depending on the show.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the demographic footprint was interesting as it demonstrated that the theatre had a big reach.</p> <p>Parking was an issue for the theatre. The Theatre Manager provided the example that a sellout show at the Playhouse affected parking for people in a class at the Blakehay. It was suggested that the issue should be taken to North Somerset Council. It was queried why people would not park further</p>

<p>367</p>	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrisey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
	<p>away and walk, and the Theatre Manager explained that people were not willing to walk far in the dark.</p> <p>As a result of the report, it was pointed out that at other venues you could walk through the bar or shop to get to the box office, which could help with profit. It was queried whether the box office or bar could be rearranged with this in mind. The Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer explained that costs and feasibility could be explored if it was the wish of the committee, to have the box office in the bar. If feasible, this would probably take place within in the 2021/22 budget considerations.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor David Hitchins SECONDED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the direction with regards to marketing and programming that the theatre was developing and evolving.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage the theatre’s Social Media following and share information. 2. Allow the exploration of ideas to improve the use of the space to provide a more welcoming theatre and to increase bar income. <p>The Chairman offered congratulations for the theatre’s award win. It was noted that the theatre was nominated for two more awards, and that nominations were open for the College Business Awards.</p>
<p>374</p>	<p>WSMTC Grant Development Report</p> <p>8.1 It was noted that a grant application to Arts Council England for the Blakehay Theatre had been submitted. If awarded the grant would enable a programme of adapted performances for people with special educational needs. It was noted that confirmation had been received that the application was eligible for funding, and that a decision would be given by the second week of May.</p> <p>8.2 A project enquiry for a redevelopment project for Clara’s Cottage would be submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund imminently.</p> <p>An expression of interest had been submitted to be considered for further visitor insights analysis at Weston Museum.</p> <p>Committee direction was required regarding Museum signage. This was an issue which had been recognised early on in phase 1 redevelopment, with funding from the HLF to address the issue of poor wayfinder signage. Conversations with North Somerset Council and the previous Development Officer prior to 2018 had been had since May 2019. The most recent update from North Somerset Council was that they still required approval for plans at Alexandra Parade before they could proceed.</p>

367	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrisey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
	<p>North Somerset Council had stated that there were already signs directing people to the Museum. The point was made that the current signage was clearly not working as people were still struggling to find the Museum. The Development Officer had inspected the current signs to give members an idea of the current provision. A number of brown signs that directed people to the Museum were being removed with no plans to replace them. North Somerset Council stated that this was because brown signs were used to direct cars, and there was not enough parking around the museum.</p> <p>Whilst understanding the reason behind North Somerset Council's delay, it was felt that enough time had been spent on the issue and a meeting should be set up with NSC executives to discuss how it could be resolved. The Chairman would set up a meeting with an executive member at North Somerset Council with the Development Officer / Deputy Town Clerk in attendance to present findings.</p> <p>RESOLVED: - That the verbal report be noted.</p>
375	<p>To receive a verbal report from of Culture Weston</p> <p>The Chairman moved the item to be discussed at this point in the meeting to accommodate Fiona Matthews attendance. Culture Weston would be launching 3rd-5th April at the Weston Arts and Health Weekender.</p> <p>Interviews for a Programme Lead would be taking place in April.</p> <p>Information on Culture Weston and the Weston Arts and Health Weekender could be found at cultureweston.org.uk.</p> <p>In response to a query about the use of the art space on Weston high street, it was explained that it was set up as a Community Interest Company. Use of the arts space was free for CIC members.</p> <p><i>Fiona Matthews left the meeting at 11:34 am</i></p>
376	<p>South West Heritage Trust (SWHT) Report</p> <p>A report from Michele Green had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The new temporary exhibition 'From Village to Town: Weston-super-Mare's Built Heritage' had its official opening on the 14th February which was well attended and received positive feedback. The exhibition would be running until the 10th May.</p>

367	<p>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrissey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.</p>
	<p>The following exhibition 'Wild Hares and Hummingbirds: The Natural History of an English Village', would run from 23rd May-13th September 2020, in partnership with Stephen Moss with illustrations from Stephanie Cole.</p> <p>The next exhibition featured the work of Ivy Millicent James a Suffragette Artist, between 19th September 2020 and 31st January 2021 tbc. A member added that Ivy Millicent James was due to be honoured with a blue plaque.</p> <p>There was damp in the temporary exhibition gallery which was causing the walling system to bend. This had been an issue for a while, and dehumidifiers had been used in an attempt to dry it out. The damp was beginning to affect the environmental conditions of the gallery, which in turn could have an effect on artefacts.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer advised that a meeting would be taking place with the building surveyor and mechanical and electrical surveyor to discuss the issue and find a solution.</p> <p>The Town Clerk had met with the new Environmental Officer at North Somerset Council, who was keen to have an exhibition relating to the climate emergency, in Weston Museum. It was noted that the temporary exhibition calendar would have to be checked for availability.</p> <p>Regarding the Museum roof replacement, it was noted that a contractor had been appointed but the main delay was weather.</p> <p>RESOLVED: - That the report be noted.</p>
377	<p>To receive a verbal report from the Friends of Weston Museum</p> <p>Heather Morrissey was unable to attend the meeting.</p>
378	<p>Heritage Action Zone update</p> <p>The report of the Heritage Action Zone Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>It was noted that the Heritage Action Zone Officer and other officers from North Somerset Council had attended a Heritage event in Portsmouth. Weston-super-Mare was highlighted as a key place where heritage was being used to help regenerate the town.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p> <p><i>Councillor David Hitchins left the meeting at 11:45 am</i></p>

367	Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Gibbons with no substitution, Peter Crew who was substituted by Councillor David Hitchins, Heather Morrissey, Sam Astill, Peter Johnson and Cara MacMahon.
379	To agree the venue for the next meeting tbc June 2020 The Town Clerk advised that a meeting could be called in May if members felt it necessary. The new meeting calendar for 2020/21 would be approved at the next full Town Council meeting. The Chairman suggested the 11 th June as a potential date for a 10am meeting at Weston Museum. The Visitor Services Manager would confirm availability.
	There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:47am The next meeting date and venue would be confirmed for 11 th June 2020 at 10am. Signed.....Dated..... Chairman of the HACC