

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL  
NOTES OF THE  
HERITAGE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE  
HELD AT WESTON MUSEUM  
ON 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

**Meeting Commenced:** 2:16 pm

**Meeting Concluded:** 3:34 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors John Crockford-Hawley (Chair), Peter Crew, Roger Bailey and Jemma Coles; Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk - Operational Services), Molly Maher (Senior Development Officer), Cara MacMahon (High Street Heritage Action Zone Officer - North Somerset Council), Josyanne Clark (North Somerset Council, Sam Astill (South West Heritage Trust) and Fiona Matthews (Super Culture).

	<p>The Chair apologised for the confusion regarding the venue, with two separate venues circulated.</p> <p>The Chair requested that it be noted there was need for a full review of the agenda be carried out in order to address errors throughout the document, which included, but was not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List of councillors was incorrect, with changes to membership having been agreed by the Town Council</li><li>• The list of non-voting co-opted members was out of date</li><li>• The date of the previous meeting was incorrect</li><li>• Defunct organisation names or reports were listed</li><li>• Reading order of reports was incorrect</li></ul>
<b>234</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Helen Thornton, and Catherine Gibbons with no substitutions and Rachel De Garang, Bethan Murray and Mike Solomon.</p>
<b>235</b>	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest received.</p>
<b>236</b>	<p><b>To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2023</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman</p>
<b>237</b>	<p><b>South West Heritage Trust</b></p> <p>The South West Heritage Trust report was previously circulated with the agenda.</p>

	<p>Sam gave an overview of the current work being carried out by the trust. He noted that the work relating to the North Somerset Collection was still being carried out at the trust by A1 Camera Club. Weston Museum was working on its Forward Plan, with the Trust involved as well as key officers.</p> <p>As of April 2023, the South West Heritage Trust were now an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. This would open up more opportunities for the Trust and potentially Weston Museum as a result.</p> <p>Members were asked if they thought it prudent to extend the Doctor Who exhibition run time, given its success to date. It could be extended for up to three months.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor John Crockford-Hawley</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To explore extending the Doctor Who exhibition beyond its current completion date, with the extended time frame to be agreed between the Trust and Officers in order to ensure it did not not impact on other programming.</p> <p>The exhibition due to take place summer 2024 was ‘Axel Scheffler: A Life in Illustration’, and in Autumn 2024 ‘Les Sandys – Weston photographer in mid-20th Century’.</p> <p>The South West Heritage Trusts’ current CEO was due to retire on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. Sam Astill had been named as successor.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>238</b></p>	<p><b>Friends of Weston Museum Update</b></p> <p>There was no representation from the Friends of the Museum at the meeting. The Chair noted that the Museum were working with the Friends to understand how they might develop moving forward.</p>
<p><b>239</b></p>	<p><b>Heritage Action Zone</b></p> <p>The Heritage Action Zone report was previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Cara confirmed that her role at North Somerset Council had been extended by six months, and she would now be staying until September 2024.</p> <p>Cara was working in partnership with Super Culture and Weston Museum to deliver a museum exhibition. There would also be an exhibition in the Sovereign Centre which would launch 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024.</p> <p>Evaluation was available for members regarding Heritage Open Days.</p>

Alongside the additional funding for Cara's time, there was also an extension to the restoration work funding. This would allow NSC to finish the work to 10 and 12 Walliscote Road and the Kendall's Building

Planning permission had been submitted for Fairfax House (formally TJ Hughes).

A cultural audit had been commissioned, looking to cultural assets throughout North Somerset. A previous draft strategy would be reviewed, with funding from Arts Council England to achieve this. There was a wide remit for this audit, with works due to take place between Christmas and May 2024.

**Members were given an update on the Levelling Up Fund:  
Tropicana**

- Surveys carried out to identify priority areas for refurbishment:
- roofing, flooring, walls
- heating, lighting and ventilation systems
- drainage, and toilet facilities
- fire, health and safety to enable capacity to be increased.
- Architects appointed
- planning application - spring.
- Building works - end of summer 2024.
- January formal procurement of operator

**Birnbeck**

- LUF: Restoration of landside buildings for reuse as visitor centre, café and commercial spaces
- Separate funding secured from:
- National Lottery Heritage Fund for landside and island buildings, structures, and public realm
- Historic England, National Heritage Memorial Fund and RNLI for restoration of the Pier itself. The RNLI will be funding restoration of the 1904 boathouse and provision of a new lifeboat station on the Island.

**Marine Lake**

- Improvements and repairs to walkway, safety features, and seating area
- Dredging contract recently agreed
- Design contract is under procurement;

**Town Centre**

- Refurbishment of 4 High Street units
- Hope to use LUF to extend HSHAZ
- Window vinyls for empty units

**Grove Park**

- Redesigning the park entrance
- Relocating and replacing the public toilet block
- Surveys have been carried out and the design contract procurement is underway

	<p><b>Wayfinding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project will build on existing signage</li><li>• Mix of signage, design and graphics</li><li>• Encourage people to walk and cycle between town centre and seafront</li><li>• Highlight assets which are harder to find</li><li>• Will link to Coast Path, Pier to Pier cycle route</li></ul> <p><b>LUF funding extension</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Funding conditions for LUF require that all projects are delivered by March 2025</li><li>• Councils across the UK requested an extension</li><li>• Particularly needed for the Tropicana and possibly Birnbeck (to 25-26)</li></ul> <p>Sam Astill informed that the Trust held archived material which might be of use for historical interpretation, particularly for Birnbeck Pier, and offered the Trusts support moving forward.</p>
<p><b>240</b></p>	<p><b>Super Culture</b></p> <p>The report of Super Culture was previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Fiona gave an update of events which had taken place this year which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good Grief Weston (May 2023)</li><li>• Whirligig Festival 9th + 10th September</li><li>• Weston Arts + Health Weekender - 29 September-1 October</li><li>• Weston Literature Festival</li><li>• Rural Touring Dance Initiative Programme</li></ul> <p>Future events included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heritage Action Zone/ High Street HAZ Culture Programme finale exhibition 'All Together Now' (provisional title) The Sovereign - Thursdays-Sundays, w/c 18 and 25 January, 1 and 8 February</li><li>• GLOW - February 2024</li></ul> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>241</b></p>	<p><b>Budget for 2023/24</b></p> <p>The Income and Expenditure reports for Weston Museum and the Blakehay Theatre had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A review of the Blakehay Theatre was currently being carried out by the Expenditure and Governance Working Group, which included reviewing the income and expenditure.</p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk advised members that secondary spend and footfall at Weston Museum were flourishing due to the pull of the temporary exhibition programme, in particular the Doctor Who exhibition. It was noted that the café sales were on target, and the shop sales were ahead.</p>

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
242	<p><b>South West Heritage Trust Service Level Agreement</b></p> <p>It was explained to members that as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, which was adopted by the Council in February 2023, there had been a need to review all service level agreements with partner organisations, and with the current agreement with the SWHT coming to an end this was explored.</p> <p>It was felt that there was demonstrable benefit to working with the Trust, noting that the museum would not function without them in its current form, with no other access to the collection. There was an increase in cost to the current agreement, but it was not considered excessive when compared with increasing costs elsewhere.</p> <p>It was also explained that this agreement formed part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund requirements, with the need for a long-term agreement in place.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor John Crockford-Hawley  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To endorse the continuation of the Service Level Agreement with the South West Heritage Trust within the budget setting process for 2024/2025</p>
243	<p><b>Communications and Marketing Report</b></p> <p>There had been issues with paying for the newsletter distribution company ‘Mail Chimp’. It was explained that this was not set up for a credit payment, and the total invoice was higher than the limit on any of the officer’s credit cards. The Deputy Town Clerk was looking for a way to pay, but welcomed suggestions of different providers. ‘Sendinblue’ was recommended.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
244	<p><b>Weston Museum Management Report</b></p> <p>The report of the Weston Museum Manager was previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>Events at Weston Museum were selling out and overall it was functioning on or above target. Members felt it was finally established, with Sam advising that this normally takes around five years with museum.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
245	<p><b>Blakehay Theatre Management Report</b></p> <p>The report of the Blakehay Theatre Manager was previously circulated with the agenda.</p>

	<p>A review of the Blakehay Theatre was being carried out through the Expenditure and Governance Working Party.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the report be noted.</p>
<p><b>246</b></p>	<p><b>WSMTC Grant Development</b></p> <p>A grant would be sought for Weston Museum to support the installation of a community archive room / history hub. It was explained that there was a lack of resources to explore funding currently, and that as a long-term project, it would require careful programming and planning before work could begin.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the verbal report be noted.</p>
<p><b>247</b></p>	<p><b>Knife angel</b></p> <p>The report of the Assistant Town Clerk (Operational Services) was previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>North Somerset Council’s Crime Reduction Unit won a bid to have ‘Knife Angel’ displayed in Weston-super-Mare in May 2024. A programme of events would run throughout the month of May.</p> <p>Other towns which had hosted the Knife Angel had seen footfall increase by up to 100,000.</p> <p>The torch, an accompanying piece of art, would be hosted at Weston Museum during this time, as well as a photography and art exhibition.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew  <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Jemma Coles</p> <p>A vote was taken and <b>carried</b>. Accordingly, it was:</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To provide £10,000 to support the Knife Angel programme of events in May 2024, from the Community Events Grant 2023/2024 budget.</p>
<p><b>248</b></p>	<p><b>Community Event Grant applications</b></p> <p>The Community Events Grant report and supporting documents was previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>The total budget for the year 2023/2024 was £60,000, with £6,000 remaining.</p> <p><b><u>The Front Room CIC</u></b>  The Front Room had applied for £4,000 to put on a Christmas show. Members were concerned that this show was already being advertised and it appeared works had already begun. Members were reminded that grants would not be given out retrospectively.</p> <p>It raised concerns amongst members that it conflicted with programming at Town Council venues, including the Blakehay Theatre. It was also noted that</p>

	<p>the funding appeared to cover staffing costs, and whilst this decision was at the discretion of members, previous precedent avoided funding staffing costs.</p> <p>An alternative was suggested, of allowing the Front Room to use the Blakehay Theatre for a performance in the future. It was felt this might be a more lucrative offer for them as it would enable them to increase ticket sales.</p> <p><b>PROPOSED BY:</b> Councillor Peter Crew <b>SECONDED BY:</b> Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>A vote was taken and was <b>carried</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> To contact the Front Room and offer them the opportunity to put on a show at the Blakehay Theatre.</p> <p>It was suggested that a review of the application and guidance might be prudent. Applications had been received from relatively small organisations, and where one of the main purposes of this fund was economic development, it was felt this was not always be achievable. Previous recipients of a Community Events Grant were mentioned, noting the audience numbers in the thousands.</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 3:34pm</p> <p>Signed.....Dated..... Chair of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee</p>