

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE
HERITAGE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT WESTON MUSEUM
ON 6th OCTOBER 2022**

Meeting Commenced: 10:00 am

Meeting Concluded: 11:29 am

PRESENT: Councillors John Crockford-Hawley (Chairman), Jan Holloway, Peter Crew, Peter McAleer and Catherine Gibbons; Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk), Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk - Operational Services), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Sally Heath (Theatre Manager) Jane Hill (Community Liaison Officer – Weston Museum), Mike Solomon (North Somerset Councillor), Tom Newman (Culture Weston) and Lorna Clark (North Somerset Council).

145	Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes Apologies for absence were received from Becky Walsh, Cara McMahon, Bethan Murray, Heather Morrissey and Lisa Clemons.
146	Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest received.
147	To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 30th June 2022 The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda. PROPOSED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman
148	Budget for 2022/23 The detailed income and expenditure reports for the Blakehay Theatre and Weston Museum had been previously circulated. Both venues performing as well as they could, with income down in some areas and up in others. Both services were working hard, but costs continued to rise. Spending Officer meetings would be taking place, and the Deputy Town Clerk would work with officers to review progress. It was noted that museum functions and the theatre auditorium were doing well with bookings. It was explained that some of the difficulties could not have been avoided by officers. Insurance provision for the entire council had increased from £14,000 last year to £65,000. This would affect the expenditure of all the services as one example of financial pressures the council is seeing in the current climate. There was also the increase in energy costs.

	<p>It was queried if the museum would be involved in the public living room scheme within the community. It was explained that the Community Wellbeing Development Officer was exploring this on behalf of the council, but that any provision would need to take operations into consideration.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>149</p>	<p>Marketing Report</p> <p>The report of the Communications and Marketing Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>John Lewis have offered to fund a blue plaque in Weston where the founder grew up. The site of the proposed plaque was currently being sold and it was suggested they wait until the sale was completed to approach the owners to avoid having to deal with two parties.</p> <p>A summary report detailing the success of Facebook and Twitter posts for Weston museum formed part of the report. Facebook posts were now being automated through Agorapulse. Members felt the report was over complicated and should be summarised in one page. A member asked if Facebook posts were ever boosted. It was explained that this was done on a case by case basis and not as a rule. It was felt that whilst this boosted the profile of the social media sites, resulting in more follows, this did not necessarily result in higher visitor numbers.</p> <p>The museum had featured in the Local Reach magazine which was popular, particularly in Worle.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted</p>
<p>150</p>	<p>Weston Museum Management Report</p> <p>The Assistant Town Clerk (Operational Services) provided a verbal report.</p> <p>The Museum team had met with representatives from the Natural History Museum. They were keen to work with the museum. It was explained that this would help with reach, as they had a large social media following.</p> <p>Sessions had been delivered on SEE Monster by members of the team.</p> <p>The volunteer had painted the café and new prints were on display, having been donated by North Somerset Council. It was suggested these could go into HQ when occupied.</p> <p>The team were preparing for October half term with Martin Brown, the horrible histories illustrators returning to host a session.</p> <p>The Wildlife Photographer of the year exhibition would be in the temporary exhibition gallery from November.</p>

Outreach work was beginning to increase after a period of little uptake due to Covid. More visits and talks were being delivered.

There were intermittent issues with leaks and flooding due to adverse weather. The team were managing this as best they could.

A member suggested producing copies of the prints from North Somerset Council for sale.

It was noted that there had been issues with the PA system during events, something which should be considered within the budget setting process.

Members queried the lack of interpretation from some exhibitions and items in the museum, in particular the Portico. It was explained that the original artists did not want to include interpretation, as it was for the audience to interpret as they wished. It was suggested that this could be explored.

Officers were working with the SWHT and Beaufort Bespoke to rehome the Civic Insignia from Grove House to Weston Museum. It was hoped it would be in situ before Christmas.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

151 Blakehay Theatre Report

The report of the Theatre Manager had been previously circulated with the agenda.

There had been lots of bookings and booking enquiries for the auditorium, up to 5 years in advance. This included bookings which were normally in other theatres. However, there had also been issues with levels of commitment, with many cancelations in recent months.

It was explained that they were working to build the theatre back up following the closure period and the budget reflected this.

Members felt that the building never looked open. It was explained that there were often private classes in the studio, or loud events which required ~~for~~ the doors to remain closed. There was restriction on opening hours due to staff availability and budget, as well as the turnaround time between shows and events. This could be explored during budget setting.

It was noted that this quiet period was not out of the ordinary, with the Playhouse's production of Mousetrap hosting 5 people.

It was not felt that the lack of a physical box office was affecting sales, as the switch to digital sales was happening across the region.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Community Liaison Officer left the meeting at 10:48 am.

152	WSMTC Grant Development The Learning and Events Officers at Weston Museum would be working with the Senior Development Officer on a grant funding application. An update would be given at the next meeting. RESOLVED: That the report be noted.
153	Community Event Grant applications The grant application and summary report had been previously circulated with the agenda. Members acknowledged that Glow 2021 had been a wonderful event, even though it was let down by the weather . It was explained that tickets were limited last year due to Covid-19 and social distancing. There would be an increased capacity this year. Theatre Orchard were working with North Somerset Council to minimise the impact of transport issues, with neighborhoods without transport links having projects brought to them. Members queried some of the details in the application, including the specific emphasis on working with female working class artists, the decision to make the event vegan, and the possibility of linking with refugees. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the application specifically asked about considerations for climate change and inclusivity, amongst other factors, hence the detail and specific suggestions for managing the event. PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Catherine Gibbons A vote was taken and was carried RESOLVED: That Theatre Orchard be awarded £10,000 from the 2022/23 community events grant budget
154	South West Heritage Trust Update Report The report of Bethan Murray had been previously circulated with the agenda. RESOLVED: That the report be noted.
155	Friends of Weston Museum Verbal Report Heather Morrissey did not attend the meeting and no update was given.
156	North Somerset Council and Heritage Action Zone Report The report of the Heritage Action Zone Officer had been previously circulated with the agenda.

	<p>It was noted that the Article 4 decision regarding stone walls had been confirmed and communications would be going out to inform the public.</p> <p>The works on Walliscote Road work would be commencing on 7th November.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted and thanks be given to Cara and the team for all their work, as well as the Civic Society.</p>
<p>157</p>	<p>Culture Weston and Theatre Orchard Update Report</p> <p>The Culture Weston and Theatre Orchard report had been previously circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>A member asked if the events on the seafront, Italian gardens and Grove Park all attracted the same audience. The data had not been collated, but Culture Weston had been working to reach a wide audience geographically. The Assistant Town Clerk (Operational Services) emphasised that the events produced were more than the final product, with lots of community involvement throughout the project.</p> <p>A member suggested reaching out to the campus as it accommodated a large community and may act as a good location for advertising.</p> <p>It was felt there was unnecessary reference specifically to South and Central Ward in the report. Members suggested this made residents of those wards feel labelled, and a large proportion of people outside those wards missed out on projects due to geography.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>158</p>	<p>Printing local history books</p> <p>Members discussed the Museum shop and the issues the lack of space caused. Some felt that the current retail offer did not reflect the purpose of the museum and that there should be more books on offer. Members were advised that was limited storage for retail and they relied on stocking items which would sell, or utilising sale or return items. It was felt that previously history books did not sell.</p> <p>The retail offer was being reviewed by officers. Books would be displayed such as they were in a bookshop and volunteers had been asked to write reviews of books they had read. It was suggested that books should be purchased in line with the temporary exhibitions. The Horrible History books had all sold out and more needed to be ordered.</p>
<p>159</p>	<p>Local History Update</p> <p>There was nothing to report.</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:29 am</p> <p>Signed.....Dated..... Chairman of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee</p>