

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE
HERITAGE ARTS AND CULTURE WORKING PARTY
HELD VIA ZOOM ON 16th SEPTEMBER 2021**

Meeting Commenced: 9:59 am

Meeting Concluded: 11:50 am

PRESENT: Councillors John Crockford-Hawley (Chairman), Catherine Gibbons, Jan Holloway and Pete McAleer; Sarah Pearse (Deputy Town Clerk), Fay Powell (Assistant Town Clerk - Operational Services), Molly Maher (Development Officer), Matthew Holden (Deputy Visitor Services Manager), Sally Heath (Theatre Manager), Becky Walsh (Communications Officer), Katherine Bell (Learning and Events Officer), Cara MacMahon (NSC Heritage Action Zones Project Officer), Richard Blows (Transformation Programme Manager Corporate Services), Tom Newman (Culture Weston), Heather Morrissey (Chair of the Friends of the Museum), Bethan Murray (South West Heritage) and Rachel de Garang (Relationship Manager Arts Council England).

131	Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes Apologies were received from Councillor Peter Crew and Malcolm Nicholson (Town Clerk). Rachel de Garang from Arts Council England was welcomed to the meeting, noting that it would be a good opportunity for the Arts Council to see the heritage arts and cultural events and initiatives taking place in Weston-super-Mare.
132	Declarations of interest There were no declarations of interest received.
133	To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 13th May 2021 The minutes of the meeting had been previously circulated with the agenda. PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway RESOLVED: That the minutes be approved and signed by the Chairman
134	Community Grants Budget £50k for 2021/2022 The Deputy Town Clerk advised that direction was required on how to distribute this portion of the budget. An application was required, and some criteria on how to judge applications. It was suggested that a small group of officers and councillors met to facilitate this.

	<p>RECOMMENDED: That the Deputy Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk (Operational Services), Development Officer, Councillor John Crockford-Hawley and Councillor Peter Crew meet to devise criteria.</p> <p>The community grants budget and grant application would now be reported to this meeting.</p>
<p>135</p>	<p>Budget for 2021/22 The detailed income and expenditure for the Blakehay Theatre and Weston Museum had been previously circulated.</p> <p>It was stated that it had been a slower year than previously envisaged. The meeting of the full Town Council in January had agreed to take a pragmatic approach to the budget, as it was thought it would be out of Covid sooner. Income was down due to the closures, but due to a surplus in the previous financial year, cash flow was not a major concern.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>136</p>	<p>Marketing Report The report of the Communications and Marketing Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>It was noted that the Deborah Kerr plaque had been unveiled, and the scheme was nearly completed. The plaque for Ivy Millicent James would be erected in line with the exhibition at Weston Museum. The Deputy Visitor Services Manager informed that the exhibition taking place would be dependent on the flooring being completed. A member suggested that the guest list for the temporary exhibition gallery opening events should be reviewed to ensure the events had a diverse audience.</p> <p>The Communications Officer reported that discussions were taking place to arrange events for Black History Month.</p> <p>A member of public had contacted the Town Council regarding the memorial plaque at Anchors Head for Kathleen Thomas. A request had been made to consider relocating the plaque to a higher position so it would be more visible. It was suggested that this be considered for future rounds of the blue plaque scheme when budget provision was available. A member of the public had requested that there be a plaque for Mandy Miller, the writer of Nelly the Elephant who was born in Weston. It was reiterated that the scheme would be assessed for future plaques when budget provisions were available.</p> <p>An event would be taking place in Ellenborough West Park called Love the outdoors on the 18th September. BBC Radio Bristol would be there and carrying out 4 interviews.</p> <p><i>Councillor Catherine Gibbons entered the meeting at 10:19am.</i></p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk queried if the person should be written to regarding the Kathleen Thomas plaque. The chairman agreed.</p>

	RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.
137	<p>Weston Museum Management Report</p> <p>The report of the Deputy Visitor Services Manager had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if members were aware of the Job roles within the Museum. It was clarified that the Deputy Visitor Services Manager was now acting as Visitor Services Manager, the Visitor Services Manager was on secondment in another department.</p> <p>It was noted that there were ongoing repairs in the William Mabel Gallery following two floods. A deadline had been set for the 18th October in order to ensure museum programming could continue. It was noted that this might not be possible due to the global shortage of supplies.</p> <p><i>Tom Newman entered the meeting at 10:23 am</i></p> <p>The Chairmen detailed the ongoing issues with flooring following two separate floods, due to issues with drainage in the street. The Deputy Town Clerk assured members that this was being dealt with, however until it was resolved it could happen again.</p> <p>Two college students were doing work experience at Weston Museum for the foreseeable future on Thursdays, hoping to do a total of 800 hours.</p> <p>The Museum café was working on an image and changing emphasis to highlight its unique nature. Whilst the shop could be making more sales, it was currently performing above the national average. A member suggested more emphasis should be put on the café being ethical.</p> <p>It was noted that emphasis was now on footfall over income. The current annual average for visitors was 33,000.</p> <p>The Deputy Visitor Services Manager informed that a lighting inspection had been carried out in Clara's Cottage, recognising that the lighting was obsolete. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that it had been previously agreed to not spend money on Clara's Cottage until phase 3 of the refurbishment began. There would also have to be other consideration to any upgrade, including electrics, so the process would not be straight forward.</p> <p>The Chairman informed that the Worle History Society would be holding an exhibition for two weeks in March 2022.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.</p>
138	<p>Blakehay Report</p> <p>The report of the Theatre Manager had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Theatre Manager reported there had been a number of requests to use the theatre for performances in the lead up to Christmas. Whilst the works were due to finish by the end of November, this was dependent on the use of</p>

	<p>a crane, which could not happen in any adverse weather. This was currently scheduled for the 12th November, but could be delayed if the wind was too strong. It was felt that the possibility of having to cancel performances was too high.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Jan Holloway</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That no bookings be taken for the Blakehay Theatre until January 2022.</p> <p>It was hoped that community classes would be able to resume in January, and a performance by the Oppits at the end of January. The Theatre Manager advised that they were hoping to take time to show potential performers around the theatre, with many new companies interested.</p> <p>The Chairman queried the report's suggestion of vaccine passports. The Theatre Manager clarified that the report had been written before the latest government announcement to not roll out vaccine passports. A member queried whether it might be good to explore anyway. It was agreed that the theatre should operate within government suggestions. The Theatre Manager advised that there would be a marketing campaign detailing safety measures that would be followed.</p> <p>The Theatre Manager advised that they would bring a reopening plan to the next meeting for members.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.</p>
139	<p>WSMTC Grant Development The report of the Development Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>It was noted that the Development Officer was working on a grant application with the Museum Learning team, which if successful would enable the Rusty Club to curate a photographic exhibition.</p> <p>The report noted changes to the Arts Council Cultural Recovery Fund grant for the Blakehay Theatre. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that whilst the changes had been agreed by the Arts Council, members also needed to give approval.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Catherine Gibbons</p> <p>RECOMMENDED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the report be noted. 2. That the changes to the Arts Council grant be formally accepted.
140	<p>South West Heritage Trust Update Report The report of Bethan Murray had been previously circulated.</p>

	<p>The Chairman informed members of the new exhibition space in the first floor of the museum, and encouraged members to visit.</p> <p>Thanks were given to the South West Heritage Trust for their help in dealing with the floods, and relocating exhibitions.</p> <p>Bethan informed that the Trust would be working with the Hospital Foundation to provide vintage posters for Knightstone Ward at Weston Hospital.</p> <p>A meeting would be taking place in October to discuss the future programming of the Temporary Exhibition Space.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.</p> <p><i>The Communications Officer left the meeting at 10:59 am</i></p>
<p>141</p>	<p>Friends of Weston Museum Verbal Report</p> <p>Heather Morrissey provided a verbal report. The Friends of the Museum had been dormant for over a year, but were beginning to meet members again. The AGM would be taking place on the 22nd September at 2:30pm at Weston Museum. The Chairman would be taking a talk on Georgian Weston. It was noted that the Friends were meeting with Deputy Visitor Services Supervisor to reassess their position within the Museum, a meeting with the Development Officer to discuss grants was welcomed.</p>
<p>142</p>	<p>North Somerset Council and Heritage Action Zone Report</p> <p>The report of the NSC Heritage Action Zone Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>It was noted that whilst the Shop Front Enhancement Scheme was progress, there were delays due to issues sourcing materials, and availability of contractors.</p> <p><i>The Assistant Town Clerk (Operational Services) left the meeting at 11:05 am</i></p> <p>A project working with Weston Museum called ‘Understanding Our History’ would be taking place over the next 3 years. The project would engage with schools. The project utilised the Museum learning team and saw the introduction of more hours for the team, grant funded by North Somerset Council and Historic England.</p> <p>A member suggested that links could be made with the Town Council’s climate change efforts. The Learning and Events Officer informed that this was already happening, with Our Green Heritage events taking place over the summer. This was carried out by the learning team and explored the connections between plastic pollution and archeology.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>143</p>	<p>Culture Weston and Theatre Orchard Update Report</p>

Tom Newman provided a verbal report. ‘Live at the Quarry’ had taken place over a three-week period in July, with 17 events, attended by 1000 people. This was the result of a grant from Arts Council England. Staging and events equipment was purchased through the grant that could be used by the community in the future.

10 murals were being commissioned in Weston as part of Upfest “Weston Walls”. This had been partially funded by the Town Council, with the remaining funds support by the Arts Council. A 3 three-day festival had taken place the previous weekend, which saw 5,000 guests. This included a performance from Motion House. The Arts and Health Week was an upcoming series of 40 events, both online and in person surrounding arts and health. This included an arts installation of the beach called ‘In Memorium’.

The 21st Century Shrine project was currently in the engagement stage. Planning permission was being obtained to have the bandstand in the highstreet.

A recent grant from the Esmee Fairbairn foundation had recently agreed to fund a 3 year programme for Culture Weston. Tom reported that Arts Council England had announced their delivery plan for 2021-2024. This listed 54 priority places, including North Somerset. It was suggested that everyone should be working together on a combined approach to ensure aims aligned within this framework.

The Deputy Town Clerk informed that one event planned by Culture Weston, ‘Glow’, had been rearranged and now clashed with Remembrance Sunday in Grove Park. It was suggested that this event should be moved to February.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley

SECONDED BY: Councillor Catherine Gibbons

RECOMMENDED: That the Glow Event be rearranged for February.

The Deputy Town Clerk also suggested that Tom attended the meeting with officers and councillors to ensure that the events grant criteria was in line with wider North Somerset aims. Richard Blows informed that the Arts Council would want to agree a development plan with North Somerset Council. Engagement with the Town Council on this would be vital. The Deputy Town Clerk suggested that Richard could also join the grants meeting to ensure there was a uniformed approach.

The Chairman asked if there was a possibility of creating a working document for planned events so that members could schedule future events in their calendars. The Deputy Town Clerk advised that organisations had been trying to achieve this for years, noting there was a need to work together.

RECOMMENDED: That the verbal report be noted.

	<p>The Chairman gave a brief background for the new members.</p> <p><i>Tom Newman left the meeting at 11:39 am</i></p> <p>The Deputy Town Clerk reported that meetings were ongoing to find resolutions to issues. The Town Council would not sign a lease until the issues were resolved. Timescales for works were indicating that works could take 30-35 weeks, including building and environment surveys, noting the need to avoid certain periods so not to disturb the peregrine falcons. The Civic Society has decided they would not allow anymore events whilst they were managing the Quarry as it had become too much to organise, with other things now taking precedent.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the verbal report be noted.</p>
<p>145</p>	<p>To report the Letter of support for the National Lottery Heritage Fund for Worlebury Camp Hillfort</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: That the letter of support be noted.</p> <p><i>Richard Blows left the meeting at 11:46am</i></p>
<p>146</p>	<p>The Deputy Visitor Services Manager informed that they had previously omitted an item during the Weston Museum Management report. The Chairman granted permission to revisit the agenda item.</p> <p>7. Weston Museum Management Report A closure period needed to be agreed by members in order to programme events for Christmas. The Deputy Visitor Services Manager suggested the 24th December – 3rd January 2022.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Catherine Gibbons</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: To approve the closure period for Weston Museum 24th December – 3rd January.</p>
	<p>There being no further business the meeting concluded at 11:50 am.</p> <p>Signed.....Dated.....</p> <p>Chairman of the Heritage Arts and Culture Committee</p>