

04th November 2024

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 21:41

PRESENT

Chair: Cllr B Callender

Councillors: P Cunnington, A Domingue, A Fraser, M Fumagalli, M Gee, A Jones, M Malvern and R Comber (the Mayor).

IN ATTENDANCE

Arts and Culture Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

There were apologies for absence from Cllr S Cornish.

MEMBERS' INTERESTS (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OR PUBLIC (Agenda Item 3)

There were no questions from members of the council or public.

ARTS & CULTURE COMMITTEE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

It was proposed by Cllr A Domingue and seconded by Cllr P Cunnington and it was

**RESOLVED
30944**

that the Minutes of Arts and Culture Committee meeting held on 2nd September 2024 (pages 17040 to 17042), copy attached, be received as a true and correct record. A vote was taken, which was 6 in favour.

MONITORING REPORT (Agenda Item 5)

The Monitoring Report dated 29th October was received and considered.

Human Library

The application was filled in in September we are now awaiting results of the application.

Book Festival Feedback from 7 – 11 year olds

Still to get feedback from School Councils and relevant councillors. Extend where possible to English leads and/or school librarians. Will be used to inform future years.

Sunny Saturdays Working Party

To be discussed under Agenda Item 10.

Painting Utility Cabinets

To be discussed under Agenda Item 8.

Diwali/Visakhi Celebration

To be discussed under Agenda Item 8.

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____



Changes to Dressing the Christmas Tree

To be discussed under Agenda Item 12

PA System for the Council

Cllr Cunnington gave a verbal update on the work he had been doing to source possible suitable options for a PA system for the Council. The choice and options had proved more extensive than he had anticipated and would like further clarification on potential uses before making any suggestions. It was noted we would need to include the Town Clerk as any budget request was now too late to go through A&C via normal budget setting and the usage of such a system would also be beyond just A&C usage.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Scoring System

To be discussed under Agenda Item: 7

Cllrs Fraser and Fumagalli joined the meeting.

COMMITTEE BUDGET (Agenda Item 6)

The Arts and Culture Committee's budget dated to 30th September 2024 was received.

SCORING SYSTEM DISCUSSION (Agenda Item 7)

The new version of the Scoring System was discussed in comparison to the previous one. The changes were noted with some trepidation about the reduction in qualitative criteria. The movement towards a narrative addition within reports to help inform Councillors when considering aim and event value was explained, and the Committee was reminded that they could weight the criteria to manage a disparity between the number of quantitative and qualitative criteria.

It was decided that the best way to measure attendance (considering the significantly different in scale events) was by percentage of maximum capacity.

It was noted that the scoring system was a piece of work that still had scope to be refined and still needed automating. Councillors were reminded that they still needed to consider weighting and using it would be the best way to identify improvements. It remains a tool to help guide discussion around events rather than as a hard measure.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER AND COUNCILLORS

FUTURE EVENTS (Agenda Item 8)

A report updating the Committee on the status of a number of proposed events was presented. The Committee were comfortable with updates to the Diwali event, which at this time was being investigated as an external project that might look for grant or other support from the Town Council. Councillors were keen to keep an eye on the event, especially if it were to be looking for Town Council support. The Arts and Culture Officer indicated that they were due to catch up with Cllr Jamthe and the Town Clerk about the concept and should the organising group request significant support, a request for additional Councillor support from Arts and Culture should be considered, which would ultimately be

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the Town Clerk's decision. The Committee were keen for the Officer to continue to work with the organisation to help formulate the event.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

Cllr Comber asked about process for any other external groups who might be interested to share culture and create their own events. The Committee indicated that any group should consider how their event might align to Council values and that there were opportunities in the Cultural and Community Grant fund for financial support. The Arts and Culture Officer also noted that they, or the Town Clerk, are always happy to be contacted with ideas.

Work would also be continuing to look into the Painting Cabinets proposal.

The Committee considered the 2026 Lunar New Year recommendation. It was proposed by Cllr Fraser and seconded by Cllr Malvern and it was

**RESOLVED
30945**

to request from F&P an increase to the Lunar New Year budget in line with CPI for next financial year. The vote was 7 in favour with one abstention.

The Arts and Culture Officer's idea to explore extending the Tabletop Takeover to include a Teens only event in the Summer Holidays was discussed. It was proposed by Cllr Malvern and seconded by Cllr Domingue and it was

**RESOLVED
30946**

to commit time to exploring the concept further.

ACTION: ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICER

CHALK ABOUT IT (Agenda Item 9)

The Committee received and considered the Chalk About It report. The event was discussed thoroughly.

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

**RESOLVED
30947**

to no longer support this event. The vote was unanimous.

SUNNY SATURDAYS (Agenda Item 10)

The Committee received and considered the notes from the Sunny Saturdays Working Party Meeting and the report from the Arts and Culture Officer. It was proposed by Cllr Fumagalli and seconded by Cllr Cllr Cunningham and it was

**RESOLVED
30948**

to no longer support this event. The vote was unanimous.

The Committee agreed that the Working Party had completed its task and was dissolved.

BOOK FESTIVAL (Agenda Item 11)

The report on this event was received and considered.

The Chair was able to announce that More Arts had offered, as part of their disbanding, a final donation to support the Book Festival Outreach in 2025. The Arts and Culture Officer reminded the Committee that if they wished for this to remain a sponsored part of the event that support would be needed to identify potential sponsors.

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**RESOLVED
30949**

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

to maintain the ticket price at £3 a seat and follow the suggestion by the Arts and Culture Officer to request to F&P to take the overall budget for the Book Festival down to £7000, which is to be made up of £3800 precept allocation, £1400 ticket income target and £1800 outreach sponsorship income target. The vote was 6 in favour with two abstentions.

DRESSING THE CHRISTMAS TREE FUTURE (Agenda Item 12)

The future of the event was considered. It was asked if there was scope to merge the event with the Winter Carnival to improve efficiency. Ultimately it was agreed that it was felt important to maintain a School's focused event and that the Winter Carnival was already complicated and very busy and this would add an element of complexity that would not be possible or beneficial for the experience of the students.

**RESOLVED
30950**

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

to request from F&P an increase to the budget to take it to £1900 total. A vote was taken with 7 in favour with one abstention.

It was agreed to continue to talk with the schools about the Dressing to see if anything would help inform future improvements to this event.

COMMITTEE INFORMATION (Agenda Item 10)

- a) Cllr Callender noted that he had been approached by a Reading arts institution and would visit to find out more in case there were opportunities to support the arts in Wokingham.
- b) There were no items for immediate marketing.

CHAIR

CHAIR'S INITIALS _____

