

Workington Town Council

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Minutes of the Culture Committee of Workington Town Council, 6pm Thursday 26 May 2016 in the Town Hall, Workington

A McGuckin (chair)	Present
C Armstrong	Present
M Bainbridge	Apologies
P Bales	Present
B Cannon	Absent
H Harrington	Present
M Heaslip	Present
B Miskelly	Present
M Rollo	Apologies
T Wardley	Apologies

In attendance: Town Clerk, Events Officer

Prior to the meeting the committee received a presentation from Stephen Hunter-Brown and Bob Daghish on their plans for a Community Music Centre in Workington. The Chair thanked them for their input and explained that the concept would be considered at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

C16.1. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs M Bainbridge, M Rollo and T Wardley.

C16.2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Heaslip drew attention to his membership of Workington Rotary for the consideration of item 5.

C16.3. Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

No items.

C16.4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The committee received the minutes of the meeting on 31 March 2016 and affirmed them as a true record.

C16.5. Cultural Events Programme 2016

The committee received a brief resume of the council's cultural activities in the past year, and of the agreed events to come. There had been over 30 events since last Mayor Making and still to come were three summer Fun Days, a Halloween Fun Day and a Christmas Fun Day, as well as the Christmas Festival itself. Of pressing concern was the imminent Paint the Town Red, on Saturday 4 June. The festival was expected to run fairly smoothly, with a benign forecast for the weather. The budget was currently running at a small underspend, mainly due to late donations and the committee was asked how it felt this might be dealt with. The Events Officer recommended that some recognition should be made to those giving freely of their time, and after this the remainder should be disbursed between the four benefiting charities of the day.

Resolved: To note the report and accept the recommendation for the disbursement of any underspends.

C16.6. Christmas Festival 2016

The committee received a brief update on the plans for the Christmas Festival. There would be a single day's event, in the absence of additional funding from Allerdale Borough Council, and this would require a road closure order for Murray Road for Saturday 3 December. There was some discussion of the nature of the closing act, with the Events Officer recommending a Blues Brothers style performance or something similar, which the committee accepted. The Events Officer went through the staging quotes with the committee, and it was agreed to continue at this point with the Maryport Blues organisation.

Resolved: To note the report and to appoint Maryport Blues Festival as the partners for the staging of the festival.

C16.7 Twinning Association

Cllr Armstrong reported on the activities of the Twinning Association. It was expecting its chair, Margaret Jones, to retire at the agm in June, but the arrangements for continuity were not yet confirmed. Sadly there would be no performance of students at Paint the Town Red, but the visiting groups would be able to join in the ceilidh at St John's afterwards. It was hoped a camping trip for younger people would now be organised for 2017.

Resolved: To note the report.

C16.8. Queen's 90th Birthday Party Funding

The Events Officer confirmed that Queen's 90th Birthday Party funding had been agreed for parties at the Helena Thompson Museum, Harrington over 55s, Banklands soup and pud club (approved in liaison with the vice chair, due to the chair's potential conflict of interest), South Workington Youth Partnership, Harrington Youth Club, and Frostoms Pensioners.

Resolved: To note the funding.

C16.9. Community Service Grant

The committee considered applications for Community Service Grants as follows:

a) Castle Rock

£300

To support the Castle Rock mini-festival in Hall Park walled garden.

Resolved: To offer funding of £300 and to invite the organisers of the event to apply for further funding of up to £1,200, subject to approval of paperwork by chair and officers.

b) Workington and District Amateur Musical Society

£300

For staging costs for Disney's High School Musical

Resolved: To offer funding of £300

C16.10. Workington App and Matrix signs

The committee received an update on the development of the App and Matrix boards promoting activities in the town using the Borough Council's Town Centre Grants programme. The App was finally getting going with CN now supplying the developer with the necessary copy and a photographer commissioned to supply additional pictures of the town. The matrix boards at Washington St and the Hub would be supplied by Scrim Signs, and the relevant permissions were now being sought.

Resolved: To accept the report.

C16.11. Cultural Events Programme 2017

The committee considered the 2017 Culture Programme, which so far included a kite festival and an Urban Skills festival. A councillor described a very positive experience of the Oddsocks Company performing Shakespeare outdoors, and it was agreed that this was the sort of drama performance which would be popular. There was some discussion of the sports day suggested

to tie in with the opening of the new sports centre, because the opening date seemed to be shifting. It was understood that there had been issues with electricity easements but that these were now overcome. The Events Officer would continue to liaise with GLL to establish timings and to see if an event could be tied in. There would be a litter pick on the Harbourside on 14-15 June. It was suggested that this would be a suitable event to support with a barbecue. The Events Officer was still collating costs for a pop-up opera. The idea of a Junior Battle of the Bands had been raised with the Carnegie.

Resolved: To pursue the Sports Day idea with GLL, to research costs for outdoor theatre and to liaise with the Carnegie over a Junior Battle of the Bands.

Resolved: To host a barbecue for volunteers taking part in the Harbourside litter pick.

C16.12. Opera Development

The committee considered a proposal from Rosehill for a follow up to their Mostly Mozart opera programme, commissioned by the Town Council in 2015. There was some discussion of the success or otherwise of the previous event and some concern was expressed about the community development aspects of the brief. It was noted that procuring events of this nature would probably require officers to set out a tighter brief which didn't just require them to find a value for money product, but would need them to embed the project in a community more convincingly.

Resolved: Not to procure the proposed development. The Events Officer to feedback to Rosehill.

C16.13. Arts Partnership

The committee considered a proposal to form a partnership with the Carnegie Theatre and Arts Centre for the employment of an Arts Development Officer. Such a role might be considered similar to the Nature Partnership Officer, but for arts development. There was concern that such a role should include the town's whole arts offer. It was noted that the Carnegie had an officer in place previously in an Arts Council funded post, in partnership with Theatre by the Lake. The grant had ceased and the post had been abolished. The chair reported that such a post would be a good fit for a project he was sketching out for youth provision.

Resolved: For officers to develop costings and a Job Description for a future meeting.

C16.14. Arts Venue

The committee considered a proposal for the development of a gallery space in the town centre. Following the successful use of the former Edinburgh Woollen Mill store on the corner of Ivison Lane and Pow Street as a gallery space for Carlisle Photographic Festival and Lake College HND students, a number of councillors had mooted the idea that the council support a permanent venue/exhibition space in the centre of town. The venue could support extra-mural work by the Helena Thompson Museum and others as well as providing local communities of artists with exhibition space.

There was concern that such a scheme would be seen as a strange priority in austere times. There was concern that any scheme should be seen as value for money, though it was accepted that this was difficult to show in an arts context.

Resolved: That officers prepare a report for a future meeting on the costs and public benefits of such a scheme.

The meeting closed at 19.52