



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ARTS STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group held on Tuesday, 22 November 2022 at 10.00 am.

County Borough Councillors - Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group Members in attendance:-

Councillor B Harris (Chair)

Councillor A Crimmings Councillor R Lewis
Councillor J Brencher

Officers in attendance:-

Ms C O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager
Mr A Williams, Theatre Operations and Development Manager
Ms A Hayes, Arts & Creative Industries Manager
Ms A Friel, Graduate Officer
Mr A Owen-Hicks, Arts Council Wales

1 Welcome and Apology

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group and an apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillor D. Grehan.

2 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor J. Brencher declared the following personal interest in respect of the items pertaining to the agenda: 'I am Trustee of the YMCA in Pontypridd, which may be referenced in discussions'.

3 Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Strategic Culture and Art Steering Group held on 14th February 2022.

4 Work Programme 2022-2023

The Principal Democratic Services Officer provided the Steering Group with the draft work programme for the 2022-2023 Municipal Year.

Members were informed that at the Cabinet meeting on 7th November 2022, the Leader reported several changes to his Scheme of Delegation, one of which was the updated Terms of Reference for the Steering Group. It was explained that the Steering Group now had a broader remit, to consider libraries and heritage, which would be reflected in future reports.

The Officer advised that the Work Programme was a fluid document which could be amended to reflect any changes to business needs throughout the year and asked Members to note its content.

Members **RESOLVED:**

1. To provide comment as appropriate on the draft work programme; and
2. To approve the draft work programme as a basis, which can be amended to reflect any changing priorities throughout the year.

5 Arts Council Investment Review & Business Plan

The Interim Strategic Arts & Culture Manager informed members of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group of the RCT Theatres' intended application to the Arts Council of Wales Investment Review 2023 and its proposed focus for the future.

The Chair noted the impact the pandemic had had on the Arts and Culture service but was pleased to note the ambitions outlined within the report in relation to the Treorchy Cultural Hub and the Coliseum developments.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language echoed the Chair's comments and was pleased to note the ambitions of the service, which he felt should be applauded. The Cabinet Member spoke of the work of the service over recent years, which had been viewed favourably by the Arts Council of Wales and reflected within the revenue settlements received by the Local Authority. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the current financial climate but hoped that funding would continue and praised the in-house service, which makes link across all services within the Council. The Cabinet Member concluded by emphasising how valuable the service was and its importance in the upcoming Eisteddfod, which would be held in RCT in 2024.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure spoke positive of the content of the report and the exciting developments. The Cabinet Member praised the team for their pro-active thinking and for linking in with

important topics such as climate emergency.

One Member spoke of the positive developments in Pontypridd such as the library, the Muni Arts Centre and the YMCA and praised the Arts & Creative Industries Manager for her work. The Member spoke of a vibrancy in the town centre and was pleased to note that the service is so welcoming and diverse when engaging with young people and bringing forward talent.

The Arts Council of Wales (ACW) representative commented that RCT was among one of the most culturally dynamic Local Authorities in Wales and spoke of the vibrant cultural sector both professionally and voluntarily. In respect of the upcoming investment review, ACW commented that RCT were well placed given the work undertaken over recent years and explained that the theatres were hitting many of ACW priorities with desire shown by the Local Authority to meet more. Members were assured that more in depth discussions would take place between ACW and officers regarding the application process as soon as the final documents and guidelines were published.

The Chair thanked ACW for the comments and prior to concluding the meeting, informed Members that an aspiration of the Rhondda Arts Festival Treorchy was to share the event throughout RCT moving forward and looked forward to working towards it in the future.

Members **RESOLVED:**

1. To consider the contents of the report and comment on the proposed key priorities.

This meeting closed at 10.28 am

**Cllr B Harris
CHAIR.**