



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, 17 January 2023 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 L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services
Ms C O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager
Mr A Williams, Theatre Operations and Development Manager
Ms A Hayes, Arts & Creative Industries Manager
Mr N Kelland, Principal Librarian
Ms A Friel, Graduate Officer
Mr A Owen-Hicks, Arts Council Wales

6 Welcome and Apology

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and an apology for absence was received from County Borough Councillor D. Grehan.

7 Declaration of Interest

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, there were no declarations of interest made pertaining to the agenda.

8 Minutes

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Strategic Culture and Art Steering Group held on 22nd November 2022.

9 Youth Music Provision

The Arts and Creative Industries Manager provided the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group with a detailed update on Youth Music provision within the Arts Service.

The officer drew Members' attention to Section 5 of the report, which outlined several projects for young people between the ages of 8 and 25 which aimed to

raise self-esteem and develop resilience.

The Chair thanked the officer for the comprehensive report and drew attention to the valuable benefits noted such as youth self-esteem, well-being and resilience. The Chair praised the Young Promoters Network and the opportunities for young people to excel.

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure spoke positive of the information provided and noted the value of such projects and programmes in providing young people with the opportunity to engage with others and learn new skills. The Cabinet Member welcomed the joint working relationship between the Arts Service and YEPS and spoke of the importance of young people acquiring new skills and employment opportunities, in addition to gaining confidence and partaking in professional showcases.

Another Member echoed previous comments and emphasised the health and wellbeing benefit of the programmes.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language praised the initiatives and felt that the benefits to young people, in terms of employment and health and wellbeing, were visible across the County Borough. The Cabinet Member spoke of the pressures on young people, schools and families as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and was of the view that the report was an example of best practice which should be shared.

The Arts Council of Wales representative suggested that the report should be shared with the new Portfolio Manager for Arts and Young People as an example of best practice.

The Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group **RESOLVED:**

1. To consider the contents of the report and comment on the information provided.

10 'Altered Images' Heritage Project

The Principal Librarian provided the Steering Group with information on the 'Altered Images' project, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NHLF) grant and led by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's Library Service.

Members were provided with the progress of the project, which provided the opportunity to rebuild capacity within Rhondda Cynon Taf and the community in relation to heritage; and sought to engage with a wide range of partners and individuals across the Borough.

The Chair thanked the officer for the comprehensive report and emphasised the importance of heritage and the need to celebrate the array of well-known personalities from RCT.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language also spoke of his excitement about the project and agreed that RCT was blessed with both industrial and pre-industrial history. The Cabinet Member commented that the exploration of history was key in terms of a sense of community and belonging and was pleased to note the engagement of several volunteers, as detailed within the report.

Another Member also spoke positive of the Heritage Project and suggested that officers engage with the newly appointed curator at Pontypridd Museum to further enhance the delivery of activities across the Borough.

Members **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the contents of the report regarding the project, progress, and next steps.

11 Membership of the Group

The Interim Strategic Arts & Culture Manager provided Members with the proposed changes to the membership of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group, in line with the priorities of the Arts Council of Wales Investment Review 2023.

The officer drew Members' attention to Section 6 of the report, where it was proposed that:

- A member of the borough's Citizens' Panel, RCT Wide Youth Forum and Older People Advisory Group be invited to join the Steering Group, with consideration given to the ways in which additional community representation can be sought in the future;
- An external arts professional was to be recruited, following the resignation of the co-opted member who undertook this role; and
- That following the future development of a Community Panel, the Chair of the panel also become a member of the Steering Group.

The officer emphasised that discussions regarding membership were in early stages and that the above-mentioned Community Panel was yet to be established.

The Chair thanked the officer for the update and stated that community engagement was paramount

The Cabinet Member for Environment & Leisure took the opportunity to thank the Independent Member of the Group, who had recently resigned from the role and commented that his involvement brought healthy interaction and challenge. The Cabinet Member agreed with the Chair's comments in respect of engagement and welcomed the opportunity to hear the views of the community to cater for local needs.

The Cabinet Member for Education, Youth Participation & Welsh Language welcomed the proposals but was cautious that groups with a larger membership can lose focus. The Cabinet Member commented on the importance of taking into consideration the appropriate attributes, interests, and expertise of any future appointments to the Group. The officer assured the Member that the proposals were in its infancy and took on board the Cabinet Member's comments.

The Steering Group **RESOLVED:**

1. To approve the proposal for changes to the membership of the Steering Group; and

2. That the Service Director of Democratic Services and Communication provides an update to the Leader on the membership recommendation for the Leader's endorsement.

12 Urgent Business

The Chair spoke of the Santa's Toy Mine experience and of the pantomime held at the Parc & Dare Theatre and wished to place on record his thanks to all involved in the fantastic events over the Christmas period.

Another Member echoed the Chair's comments and spoke highly of her experience at the Christmas pantomime. The Member commented that it was one of the best she'd attended.

This meeting closed at 10.55 am

**CLLR HARRIS
CHAIR.**