

CULTURE, ARTS & HERITAGE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**TUESDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2024 - 4.00
PM**

PRESENT: Councillor E Sennitt Clough (Chair), Councillor D Cutler (Substitute), Councillor L Foice-Beard, Councillor Dr H Nawaz, Councillor M Purser, Councillor S Tierney (Substitute) and Councillor S Wallwork (Substitute).

APOLOGIES: Councillor Miss S Hoy (Vice-Chairman), Councillor S Count and Councillor P Hicks.

Officers in attendance: Phil Hughes (Head of Leisure Services/SRO March Future High Street Project) and Helen Moore (Member Services and Governance Officer).

CAH1/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was proposed by Councillor Nawaz, seconded by Councillor Tierney and resolved that Councillor Sennitt Clough be elected as the Chairman of the Culture, Arts and Heritage Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

CAH2/24 APPOINTMENT OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR

It was proposed by Councillor Sennitt Clough, seconded by Councillor Nawaz and resolved that Councillor Hoy be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Culture, Arts and Heritage Committee for the Municipal Year 2024/25.

CAH3/24 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 19 February 2024 were confirmed and signed.

CAH4/24 CREATIVITY AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE

Jamie-Lea Taylor gave a Creativity and Development Officer update as follows:

- UK Shared Prosperity Funded Amplifying Community Arts & Culture project - there has been a positive reaction around one of the Fenland culture funds at the beginning of this year, with round two of the fund expected to launch at the end of this year. There is £35,000 secured funding which will allow a similar size project to be run as round one and there will be joint working with Fenland Partnership, the Arts Council and Cause 4 to build on last year's learnings, take on feedback received and develop an event to celebrate those achievements in the first round and launch the next opportunities of the grants along with alternative fundraising opportunities. Within this project there are also some training opportunities, with one potential project under review which will include a Fenland specific training and mentoring programme aligning with the CPCA skills and training priorities, in addition to this the Fenland Culture Partnership sub-group are going to offer a series of free training sessions which is in response to identified support needed in the local sector, specifically around marketing skills. A programme is being put together of educational sessions that will be free to attend and provide high quality professional training on subjects including data, digital marketing and understanding audiences.
- the Express Yourself project is coming to an end, this saw £50,000 of tackling prevention funding secured by the Council from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System, it was delivered in collaboration with 2020 Productions who are Fenland based Arts

Council national portfolio organisation and across the project 363 children and young people took part. It was a six-week programme of art and culture activities, and the sessions were held in all four of the market towns and ten of the village schools, the breakdown was 269 primary school children, 78 teenagers and 16 young adults between 18 and 24 years old took part, positive feedback was received across the board from the young people involved with their parents, teachers, and professionals. 11 artists and creative professionals living and working in Fenland worked with the well-being team at 2020 productions to deliver those sessions and they were able to offer free training too at the beginning, throughout and at the end of the project which involved skills and development training about special educational needs and disabilities, safeguarding the NHS five ways to well-being model, how to support children and young people who might be struggling with social emotional mental health challenges and then the last session was about embedding well-being into personal practice as an artist.

- the Fenland Culture Partnership and its sub-groups has held three meetings since this committee was last together earlier in the year, and continues to meet with purpose, the membership has grown and is now up to 11 members including two FDC Councillors and two FDC officers and also artists, funders, community organisations and venues. The Partnership has been travelling around the district to meet rather than one static meeting place, there is also a system in place where the Partnership can share duties of being a chair of each session which has been beneficial for everyone involved. The dynamic of the Partnership is also shifting as ownership is becoming more shared, with the Council Cultural Strategy being for everyone and each of those members through their role and own organisations, can play a part in delivering it together for the district. The Culture Partnership decided it would establish two sub-groups at the beginning of the year, the first one of those is the Health and Well Being sub-group that has met three times in May, June and September. From the first meeting of that group, they have worked hard to expand to a much broader range of attendees, the invitations go out to social prescribers, arts organisations, the How You Fenland team, the integrated neighbourhoods, the Police, Libraries, Youth Workers and more. In the second meeting a lot of discussion took place around what is already happening between them but more efficiently with the Health by Stealth and how by using Arts and Cultural activities support can be provided to people in the community to improve their mental and physical health. For the third meeting it was agreed that the group would like to work together on a community project in Whittlesey potentially based around textiles but is in the early stages of an idea and the members of the group are working on a project outline with the Council organising funding and a lead for the project to get it started with the group that was involved with that meeting having found it very positive to have a project to focus on. The second sub-group is for Communications and Marketing and so far, it has met three times in April, June and July. This group took learning from a survey that was completed by the local sector and were able to put together some projects immediately with a series of training sessions to upskill the local cultural work force but specifically in marketing skills which are currently being put together and envisaged to start within the next few months, these will all be in person and a mix of locations across the district.

Members made comments, asked questions, and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Purser congratulated Jamie-Lea Taylor on all her hard work on behalf of the committee.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated in terms of round two is there a launch date yet? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded there is not a specific date yet, but she is putting together an event for November and is waiting to hear on the availability of a venue for the types of times that would suit, then invitations will be sent out. She stated that the event is a chance for those who were successful in round one to come together and be celebrated and to launch round two in person which was not possible last year. Councillor Sennitt Clough asked if the launch is going to be in November she understood the money needs to be handed out by March, and is there enough time to organise everything, given that there is Christmas and

the Fenland Poet Laureate (FPL) awards before that time? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded last year the application was open for six weeks and it was massively oversubscribed in terms of applications for the budget available, there are some decisions to be made on keeping it open for that length of time to give people the chance to put everything into their application, but she felt it would still be possible to make decisions by January and payments for February.

- Councillor Wallwork asked, as there was a massive over subscription last time with applications are they looking to make sure the same people do not get the same amount of money or looking at new projects this time? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded the criteria is still yet to be determined for round two, the learning will be taken from last time and the sorts of projects that might want to be put in with the event in November hopefully having a bit of a funding surgery session in it to give people a bit more of a clear idea of the sort of application to submit. She added that there might be a criteria for people who have applied before but it is a partnership project with the Arts Council and would be in conversation with them as well. Councillor Wallwork asked, in terms of the projects from last time she is assuming they were evaluated on who they reached because in her experience it can be the same people that go to everything? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded of the 19 successful projects they were supplied with a project review form and as the year has gone on those who have already completed or finished, have sent them back in, some of the projects are longer, some are still on-going so not all 19 are finished as yet from the current review forms the team can look at numbers, groups of people, feedback and learning and how things might have changed through those forms.
- Councillor Tierney stated in terms of funding he would like to understand where the funding comes from for the partnership. Jamie-Lea Taylor responded the Fenland Culture Partnership does not have any of its own funding, some of it comes through the Council in partnership with other organisations and sometimes that is the partnership and what they are able to achieve together. She stated that the Culture Fund is a collaboration project between Arts Council England and the Shared Prosperity Funding Project Amplifying Community Arts and Culture. Councillor Tierney asked is their Council money going into an independent organisation? Jamie-Lea Taylor replied no the Fenland Culture Partnership is not an organisation it is a voluntary group of people that meet, the chair and herself are a member of this group plus Phil Hughes and volunteers such as community organisations, artists, Cambridgeshire County Council through their libraries and museum services, that meet to move forward together on the strategy but it is not an independent organisation. Councillor Tierney asked where the funding is held from in the Council if there is no organisation? Jamie-Lea Taylor replied that the funding comes through the job role that she holds within the Council. Councillor Tierney questioned that an independent organisation is deciding how to spend that money. Jamie-Lea Taylor stated that the Fenland Culture Partnership is an advisory board in terms of the partnership projects but that partnership does not have sole decision as the Council has its procedures to go through too. She added that previously the decisions came through officers and portfolio holders, but they now support her role to deliver the strategy to the advisory group.
- Councillor Nawaz asked if contact has been made to the CPCA Social Enterprise Funding as was suggested during the last meeting? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded the Health Sub-Group has not made contact yet but there is a Creativity and Culture Forum next week that has been organised by the CPCA.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough asked, in terms of a venue for round two will there be money involved that will come out of the £35,000 to be spent on the venue hire and any refreshments? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded that this was not the case as it is also in partnership with an organisation called Cause 4 and their arts fundraising and philanthropy programme and she also separately achieved £5,000 infrastructure costs to scope this work and to pay for things like catering, venue hire and bringing in professionals like photography for an event which is separately funded elsewhere. Councillor Sennitt Clough asked in terms of the organisations that were just mentioned are they part of the Giving Circle. Jamie-Lea Taylor stated through an agreement she has with them and the infrastructure

cost mentioned they have also been supporting the project with researching and scoping what a Giving Circle concept might look like in Fenland and this work is ongoing. Councillor Sennitt Clough asked if there had been any other organisations that have come forward to form part of that Giving Circle? Jamie-Lea Taylor replied there has been no launch yet.

- Jamie-Lea Taylor continued with an update on the ACE Place Partnership Project Fund application which has moved forward thanks to significant work and time put in from other partners. She stated that in April there was a workshop held in March Town Hall and the outcome and feedback received has heavily informed the application. Jamie-Lea Taylor stated that working together has created change for both culture and communities locally, in May the proposed project was agreed by the Fenland Culture Partnership that along with other partners are producing an application to the Arts Council's Place Partnership Fund and that expression of interest has now been submitted with a decision expected by the end of October for an invitation to submit a full application.
- Councillor Wallwork asked for some clarification on what the Place Partnership Fund is? Jamie-Lea Taylor explained that the Place Partnership Fund is one of Arts Council most significant project grant scheme which is for projects of £100,000 up to £1,000,000 and as Fenland is classed as a priority place for the Arts Council it means there has been support and encouragement as a way of a serious avenue for funding going forward. She stated that essentially what is being studied is a step change and what would make a real and lasting change to the arts and culture sector in an area and beyond the lifetime of a project that they are funding and what would make a tangible noticeable change for communities, this is the largest project within the Cultural Strategy that has been carried out so far and there has been a lot of support from the members of the Culture Partnership and other local sectors plus the Arts Council. Councillor Wallwork asked as the Council are a priority does that mean the Council is in line for the funding and how much could be received? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded it comes down to the content of the application and if that meets the criteria.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough asked if Marketplace CPP based in Ely are leading on the application for the place partnership bid which is being funded by Clarion? Jamie-Lea Taylor stated that Marketplace do have an office in Ely and work across the whole of Fenland and have been getting an expression of interest together, but they are not leading on the application. She stated that the lead applicant is Clarion Futures with the Council as a strategic partner and other organisations, with there being three sorts of partnership levels which means that different varying sizes of partners across the district, whether or not they have got actual cash match on hand or if they can support with their skills and their time have all got an opportunity to get involved if they want to or are able to. Jamie-Lea Taylor added that the Expression of Interest has been submitted with Clarion Futures as the lead applicant with Rob Drummer from Marketplace CCP helping to drive this project forward and submitting an Expression of Interest form as has Kathleen Nightingale from 2020 Productions along with many other within the partnership.
- Councillor Wallwork asked what the project is that the council are submitting and who will oversee delivering the project if the funding is successful? Jamie-Lea Taylor responded the project, if successful will be led by Clarion Futures but the delivery of the project will be carried out by the partnership working on three levels offering what they can over the three years. She stated that the project is in its infancy but if successful it looks to cover cultural leadership, development and infrastructure development in order to upskill the sector and be in a better position moving forward, the project would also look at developing the existing festivals within the area and look at a new landscape wide multi-art form quality programme.

Members noted the Creativity and Culture Development Officers update report for information.

CAH5/24 FENLAND POET LAUREATE AWARDS

Councillor Sennitt Clough gave an update on the Fenland Poet Laureate Awards, including

feedback from last year's awards and asked the committee for ideas and feedback for the upcoming awards

Members made the following comments:

- Councillor Nawaz stated that the format worked well last year and suggested to keep it the same for this year's awards.
- Councillor Tierney stated he has been to a few awards and thought that last years Fenland Poet Laureate Awards was one of the best he has attended, he agreed with Councillor Nawaz that the dates and organisation with the help from officers should be the same for this year.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough stated that the dates the competition worked on last year were mid-December for entries
- Jamie-Lea Taylor confirmed the entry date was the 4 December 2023 until the 31 January 2024 and then the Awards were held in the middle of March 2024.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough asked the committee if they were happy to agree a date for the beginning of December 2024 until the end of January 2025 for this year's competition entries to be submitted and for the ceremony to take place around mid-March 2025?
- Councillor Wallwork agreed the dates would work well and should not be affected by any local elections that happen in May.
- Councillor Foice Beard asked are there some Fenland Unsung Hero Awards around the month of March? Councillor Wallwork responded that the Pride in Fenland is being moved back slightly so as not to clash with the elections and the Unsung Heros Award has been moved to January which means the Fenland Poet Laureate Award should fit in nicely mid-March.

Members agreed to the timeline discussed.

Councillor Sennitt Clough asked the committee for feedback on whether enteries should live, work or attend schools in the Fenland area and if agreed how can this be a bold rule?

- Councillor Tierney agreed that entries should live or work within the Fenland area to be able to keep this as a Fenland award.

Members agreed to keep the Fenland Poet Laureate Award Fenland based and to have this stated within the guidelines of the competition.

Councillor Sennitt Clough asked the committee if they were happy to filter the entries as was set out last year and then for herself and Hannah, last year's winner, to choose a winning selection?

- Councillor Nawaz agreed this was a good idea.
- Councillor Tierney suggested it would be a good idea to have an officer present as an independent observer. Councillor Sennitt Clough responded that Jamie-Lea Taylor does anonymize the entries before the judging takes place and was concerned that an officer may not have the time to observe.
- Councillor Purser suggested if officers time is sparing the Council Chairman could be asked as an independent observer.
- Councillors Tierney, Wallwork and Nawaz all agreed they did not feel, and observer would be necessary but that the idea should be taken on board the situation arise in the future.

Members agreed to filter the entries and Councillor Sennitt Clough and Hannah (last year's winner) would select the category winners.

Councillor Sennitt Clough asked the committee what their thoughts were around asking the competition entries to write an accompanying statement to go with their work?

- Councillor Cutler agreed there should be a statement to accompanying the poem submitted
- Councillor Wallwork asked if there was a word allowance for the accompanying statement?

Councillor Sennitt Clough responded last year it was up to an A4 page.

- Councillor Tierney stated that he was not in favour of the accompanying statement as it detracts from the poem written and feels the judging should be solely on the poem submitted.
- Councillor Wallwork and Councillor Purser agreed with Councillor Tierney that judging should be on the quality of the poem
- Councillor Nawaz disagreed and stated the statement can add a certain context to the poem
- Councillor Foice Beard added if the poem has done its job, then it should not need to have an accompanying statement. Councillor Purser agreed
- Councillor Nawaz stated that he felt with the statement added it can give body to the work submitted

Members agreed that an accompanying statement was not a necessary part of the competition.

Councillor Sennitt Clough asked the committee if they have any idea for promoting the competition?

- Councillor Tierney stated that social media is always the strongest element and suggested publishing some of last year's winning entries to build interest.
- Councillor Sennitt Clough suggested displaying last years poems in the local libraries to generate interest. Jamie Lea Taylor confirmed this was a suggestion given last year and there is work happening with the Communications Team to put some of last year's winning entries and the runners up together to be shared on the Council's website and social media sites

Members noted the suggestions for extra promotion.

CAH6/24 ACE STOWMARKET VISIT

Jamie Lea Taylor shared with member the ACE Stowmarket visit which the Arts Council has recommended to enable learning to enhance what this committee can bring to the Fenland area.

Councillor Sennitt Clough stated she will supply an update to members after the visit has happened.

4.55 pm

Chairman