

MINUTES OF THE ARTS AND INFORMATION COMMITTEE HELD ON 25TH APRIL, 2017

Present: Councillor K Younger (Chair) and
Councillors, E Bell, Mrs J A Bell, B Burn,
S Cudlip, Miss S Morrison, C Snowball

Apologies: Councillor R Arthur, Mrs H J Cahill,
Mrs S Forster, I Paul, K Shaw, B Taylor

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

2. PRESENTATION

The Chair welcomed Ms Nikki Locke, Head of East Durham Creates to the meeting.

Ms Locke stated that East Durham Creates (EDC) has been running for three years and it's about getting people involved in the arts. At present EDC is finishing phase 1 and is currently starting phase 2 which they have received further investment for which will run until 2020.

EDC have learned a lot over the past three years which has made EDC think about what they are going to do over the next three years. When EDC put forward their first business plan to the Arts Council they had to give a vision up to 2024 and they are now in the middle of the plan. EDC is not an arts organisation and they are restricted to funding grants, they are here to show how the arts can be useful and how they can benefit people's lives in different places across the country. There are 21 projects running across the country.

For the next 3 years the EDC want to test and create conditions for the arts to enrich the quality of life which is going to be measured through 'cultural wellbeing'. This will see how arts can make people feel better about themselves, about feeling better about where they live and to find out what works and what doesn't work. The main thing for EDC over the next three years is about sustainability as they are looking to invest in the future beyond 2020 and beyond the Arts Councils funding. They want to ensure that the Arts Council fund more into these areas.

EDC are looking to build confidence in the arts. When EDC speak to members of the public they think that the arts are about ballet, opera and that is only for certain members of the public to enjoy. EDC want to find out what makes art great in East Durham and it doesn't have to be just about ballet and opera. They want to build

skills so when the Arts Council funding ceases people can fund raise and continue to run their own programmes, they want to create new artists from the area, to be able to support organisations, for towns and venues to have their own plans and arts policies and they want to look at infrastructure.

There is a three year programme in place and the first year is planned, EDC are awaiting sign off from the Arts Council. Years two and three are open as EDC want people to inform them of what it is they want. EDC want to support home grown creative talent and want art to be vibrant and exciting. There are three different strands of the creative programme over the next three years one is called This Place We Call Home which is three commissions of brand new pieces of artwork which will be made by the people of East Durham, the first commission will be working with families with young children, the second commission will be with older adults with dementia or to reduce the amount of people who live in isolation, and the third commission with people who are not in employment, education or training. This is for people to gain skills, learn and build something magnificent in 2020. The second strand is called Art For Everyone and East Durham Trust will continue to lead. The small grants scheme will continue so people can apply for projects and funding that they can lead themselves and with East Durham Trust they will create a creative community leaders network. The aim is to bring people together across East Durham who want to make a difference to where they live through the arts. The network will offer support to people to realise their intentions. The third strand is called Strikes of Brilliance based around the miners' strike.

By 2020 EDC wants to see lots of good art in local towns that brings town centres to life.

The cultural hubs programme will continue which may or may not be of interest to Seaham which is around bringing theatre to venues with reasonable ticket prices for people £2 for people who live in East Durham and £4 for people outside of East Durham. There will also be a creative talent scheme for any age or any level of expertise or experience.

Ms Locke stated that if Seaham Town Council have any ideas or plans that EDC would wish to hear them as there is funding available that EDC could potentially tap into. There will be advisory groups that Councillors are welcome to attend to discuss ideas.

Ms Locke discussed a new website named Synergy which people can access its costs £99 including VAT where people can download performances from the National Theatre such as 'An Audience with Helen Mirren' or Shakespeares Globe, Ballet or Opera these can then be screened in local venues.

There is also a project being run by Durham County Council 'Ps in a Pod' which is three sculptures called 'The Same But Different' which are going to be placed at Noses Point from 27th May until 10th September, 2017 by an artist named Louise Plant. An open day will be held on 3rd June which will have workshops, there will be a marquee and toilets and EDC will be providing a bus to take people there. The marketing for this event is not yet available.

At this point Members were invited to ask any questions and the following comments were made:

- (i) A Member stated that in Church Street various things have been discussed and one of the things talked about is the shuttering similar to the one at Harbour Pizza and that if other shops had a similar dramatic scene that in itself could become a piece of art and also a draw for the public and could be quite exciting which could also generate people coming into Seaham as well as brightening the whole of Church Street up.

Ms Locke stated that she would be excited to do a project like that. Ms Locke has contacts that could help and EDC could also assist in terms of finding funding. Ms Locke suggested holding a separate meeting to discuss this further to see if a development plan could be pulled together and to see if this can be taken further as it is a wonderful idea.

A Member noted that this has been discussed and it is expensive but it is not impossible and a meeting should be arranged to discuss this further.

- (ii) A Member stated that she is not convinced that there is the 'buy in' from the people of Seaham and wondered whether there would be any scope to try something at the Carnival to get people involved and engaged?

Ms Locke stated that at Fleetwood Tram Festival in Blackpool EDC's counterparts for that area work with them every year to bring something art wise. EDC would like to talk about that and how to get people involved and make it sustainable in this area. It may be an idea to get children and young people involved in creating something. The Town Council would need to find out what their priorities are and EDC can help to support them and work with the Town Council to decide on priorities and offer suggestions. Ms Locke stated that EDC had held a test Pirates and Princesses at Crimdon Dene last year and they have lots of stuff that they can give to Seaham from that event as Seaham are holding a similar event this summer.

- (iii) A Member questioned whether Seaham could have test events carried out here?

Ms Locke noted that EDC can hold test events in Seaham. She would need a contact of who she can talk to regularly.

- (iv) A Member stated that Seaham Town Council wants to work with EDC and a meeting could be set up with the Chair, Vice-Chair and Deputy Town Clerk so that Members views and ideas can be channelled correctly. It would be good if EDC could enhance Town Council events and this would also give more kudos to EDC to be working with a Town Council.

Ms Locke noted that a little sub-committee or steering group would be a good idea. EDC have particular audiences they have to target so this would be a two way arrangement.

The Chair thanked Ms Locke for attending the meeting and stated that the Town Council are now more informed with regards to EDC.

A Member stated that a paper needs to be prepared stating the ideas for projects such as the Church Street shuttering and to see if there is any potential for funding. Officers should prepare the paper then invite Ms Locke back within the month to a Council meeting with a set of proposals. It was noted that funding may be available now so the Council should pursue this. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that EDC's target is to deal with people who are not involved with art and to get them involved. As Seaham is seen as successful with art Seaham may not be within EDC's criteria.

RECOMMENDED that the Deputy Town Clerk prepares a report and arranges a meeting including the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee to discuss possible future projects with East Durham Creates such as test events and Church Street shuttering art work.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 28TH MARCH, 2017

RECOMMENDED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

4. CONFERENCE APPOINTMENTS

RECOMMENDED the list of conference appointments a copy of which had been previously circulated, be approved.

5. CONFERENCES, COURSES AND SEMINARS

a) Evaluation Form

A Member noted that the Armed Services covenants related more to larger Councils and was not relevant to Seaham Town Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

6. WELCOME TO DURHAM VOICE

RECOMMENDED the Council note the information now reported.

7. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED the Council note that no press opportunities existed from this meeting.