

## **EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of a Meeting of the Arts and Culture Forum held at the Beehive, Honiton on 14 March 2018**

#### **Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 10.00am and ended at 12.50pm.

#### **\*13 Minutes**

The minutes of the Arts and Culture Forum meeting held on 11 October 2017 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting and invited those present to introduce themselves.

#### **\*14 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Tom Wright - Personal interest: He was a friend of the Fairlynch Museum, Budleigh Salterton.

#### **\*15 Villages in Action programme 2018/19**

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Tim Smithies, Chief Executive for Carn to Cove to the meeting. Carn to Cove was Cornwall's performing arts touring scheme similar to Villages in Action (VIA) which operated in East, West and South Devon. It enabled rural communities to bring something 'different' to their village hall and to create a social event to bring the village together. The scheme offered professional acts at competitive prices, reducing the financial risk to the hall and giving it the chance to make some money to contribute to the sustainability of the hall in the community.

The Service Lead – Countryside and Leisure explained that EDDC put £10,000 funding annually into VIA, and it was well supported and appreciated in East Devon. He would like to see the programme continue as commitment to this type of activity was a key feature of the culture strategy. Funding for VIA was outlined in the presentation and included a grant from the Arts Council as well as a contribution from EDDC.

Tim explained that Carn to Cove and VIA had put together a menu of artistic events including dance, theatre, music, puppetry, storytelling, poetry and film. Voluntary promoters from the network of community venues chose which events they would like to host in their local hall. Carn to Cove then administered, underwrites and co-ordinated the tours. The voluntary promoters would run the event, build an audience and look after the artists on the day. It was critical to be responsive to local needs and identify what worked and what did not work.

A brochure for the spring season had been published, containing 45 events. This was also available online. Devon performers had been employed, a volunteer promoter network maintained and the Locomotor Project launched. The Locomotor project would:

- Stabilise rural touring in south Devon.
- Expand international programming content.
- Introduce new systems for IT and ticketing.
- Organisational development – test new models of working with new stakeholders for sustainable system: Options Appraisal Panel

The options appraisal for what the future shape of VIA should be involved trialling:

- Hub & Spoke collaborative working
- Made in Devon Developing Project in the Community

- New partnerships: The Pub is the Hub; DanceLab Dementia Cafes; Outdoor Work

The Countryside Service Lead suggested that some of the promoters from the Locomotor bid be invited to attend a future forum meeting to feedback on activity and progress. The Chairman thanked Tim on behalf of the forum for his interesting presentation.

**\*16 Jurassic Coast Trust: where we have come from and where we are going**

The Chairman welcomed Dr Sam Rose, Chief Executive of the Jurassic Coast Trust to the meeting. He explained that the bid for the trust was led by Dorset and Devon County Councils and the Dorset Coast Forum. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) created the idea of World Heritage (WH) to protect sites of outstanding universal value through the principles of peace and co-operation. The World Heritage Convention (1972) linked together the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural properties:

- Look after the site for now and for the future (article 4).
- It needs to be of value to people (article 5).
- Tell everyone about it in a meaningful and interesting way (article 27).

What made the concept of World Heritage exceptional was its universal application. World Heritage sites belonged to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they were located. They were to be inclusive. To be of outstanding universal value the site must:

- Meet one or more criteria.
- Show integrity and (if cultural) authenticity.
- Have effective protection and management.

It must therefore be unique and the best of the best, complete, real and well looked after.

Between 2001-2017 the Jurassic Coast Steering Group and Team had been looking after the WH site. A great deal had happened over that time, including developing centres and facilities, arts projects, interpretation panels, 2012 Jurassic Coast Earth Festival and the Jurassic Coaster (Jurassic Coast bus). The WH site designation brought up to £111m of economic output and up to 2000 jobs per year to Dorset and East Devon.

From 2017 the Jurassic Coast Trust was entrusted with looking after the Dorset and East Devon WH site and status. The site management plan was at the heart of what the Jurassic Coast Trust did, but for most people the Jurassic Coast was not 'a Plan'. The Trust was an independent cause led charity. It had over 50 volunteer ambassadors (led by East Devon) and a Management Plan Advisory Committee (which included EDDC). It had big plans for the future, including:

- Creating publications
- Community engagement
- Fossil conservation
- Support for education projects
- Go Jurassic Rangers
- Business partners

The vision for the future was 'that everyone loves, understands and values the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site'. The mission was 'to enable everyone to have the best possible experience of England's only natural World Heritage Site, whether they want to learn, enjoy, work or study. The aims were:

- To protect the Jurassic Coast and its setting.
- To engage people and organisations with the World Heritage Site.
- To deepen everyone's understanding of the Jurassic Coast.
- To sustain the organisation financially and demonstrate exemplary governance.

This would be achieved in many different ways, working with many different people who loved and valued the coast and wanted to make a difference. The Trust did not work to administrative boundaries, just geological ones. It was there for the benefit of everybody who worked, lived and played there.

On behalf of the Forum the Chairman thanked Dr Rose for his presentation. It was noted that all the information and events were on the Jurassic Coast Trust website.

**\*17 East Devon's museum programme review and future plans**

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Victoria Harding, South West Museum Programme Manager to the meeting. Victoria began her presentation by setting the wider regional context of the museums in the southwest, and then locally. There were seven accredited museums in East Devon. Five museums were run entirely by volunteers and two were major National Trust properties. The museums received over 270,000 visits per year and the visits contributed £6 million to the local tourism economy. 3,926 participants engaged in education, activity and outreach sessions run by the museums. Volunteers were incredibly important to the museums, with 87,741 hours contributed by 1,024 volunteers. The value of volunteer contributions to museums and their surrounding communities was £626,721.

South West Museum Development (SWMD) was established in 2006 and restructured in 2012 under Arts Council England. It was one of nine regional Museum Development Providers. In 2015-18 the south west received 15% of the national allocation. From 2018-2020 it would receive 16.9% of the national allocation. This funding was based on a formula and the budget had increased due to the dominance of volunteer run museums. A new version of the SWMD programme for 2018-2022 would be published.

SWMD was hosted by Bristol City Council and consisted of a team of 17 staff who delivered development and technical services, including:

- 9 area based Museum Development Officers.
- 5 Technical/Thematic Officers.
- 3 Programme Administration Projects.

They also influenced and facilitated access to nationally funded programmes, which all contributed to organisational resilience.

In 2015 – 2017:

- 244 museums benefitted from collection care advice, site visits, loan of environmental equipment and conservation advice.
- Sustainable volunteering development support was provided to 62 museums.
- Digital engagement support was provided to 77 museums.
- £267,488 was contributed by local authority partners to support the enhanced museums access programme.
- 453 museums benefitted from support.
- £1.306m was invested in museums by Arts Council through SWMD.
- £86,016 was awarded in small grants to 78 museums.
- 726 delegates attended the museums skills training.

Victoria went on to explain what had been delivered for East Devon. There had been a 34 fold increase in EDDC investment from £1,500 to £50,517. There had also been investment from Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton town councils, and external grants from Art Fund, John Ellerman, Heritage Lottery and Arts Council England. A wide range of SWMD technical and thematic support services had also been provided. This included a

conservation development officer, a fully subsidised training programme (south west museum skills) and 'Small Grant: Big Improvement'.

The presentation also included the reasons why EDDC should continue funding SWMD, as the core offer provided access to:

- Technical accreditation advice.
- MDO support.
- Free high quality training.
- Subsidised 'In Depth Skills'.
- Online advice and support in programme thematic services.
- Sector data/benchmarking.

In addition the enhanced offer provided:

- Increased MDO capacity to support fundraising and partnership development.
- Grant programme £1-£7k.
- Development grants up to £5k.
- Increased investment through external funded projects.
- Access to micro consultancy, development support in collections, audiences, volunteering and digital engagement.

On behalf of the forum the Chairman thanked Victoria for her presentation.

#### **\*18 Blackdown Hills AONB cultural heritage activities**

The Blackdown Hill's AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) Manager gave a presentation on the AONB cultural heritage activities in East Devon, much of which overlapped with the cultural strategy, and worked in partnership with many organisations:

- Engagement to celebrate cultural, natural and historic heritage: the natural futures project and other engagement.
- Historic England project – an integrated approach to valuing heritage.
- Fragile beauty exhibition and events, celebrating Robert Bevan and the Camden Town artist's work of the early 1900s.

Key features of the Blackdown Hills natural futures project included:

- Over 150 sites were surveyed by the team.
- All 9 trainees secured employment after training.
- Rare plants and the UK's first black dormouse were discovered.
- 17 community projects were supported and sites improved for wildlife and communities.
- Ecological 'expert' visits were organised.
- Rural skills and land management training events were held.
- There was support from Neroche Conservation Volunteers.
- AONB support for projects would continue.
- 60 events were run over 3 years, including 3 annual bio-blitz events.
- Over 2,500 people engaged in wildlife and nature conservation activities.
- 24 primary school visits were made.
- Over 1,000 children and teachers engaged in wildlife activities.
- AONB led school visits would continue.
- 14 art sessions were run based on environmental education themes of different habitats of the Blackdown Hills. An exhibition of the children's final work was produced.

- Dormouse nest boxes were now sited at new locations across the Blackdown Hills AONB. Long term monitoring would be sustained through the Somerset Mammal Group.

The Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership was 75% funded through DEFRA and 25 funded by local authorities, including EDDC.

On behalf of the forum the Chairman thanked the AONB Manager for his presentation.

**\*19 EDDC What's On website update**

The Countryside Service Lead reminded that the forum that the Business Systems Manager, Strata had attended the last meeting to discuss the aspirations for a 'what's on' page on the EDDC website. It had since been decided that this was a communications issue. The Countryside Service Lead suggested that if members had any further ideas or views that they discuss these with the Strategic Lead - Organisational Development and Transformation, particularly with regard to expectations of the website and the format.

Annette Ladbrook, Environment Service web author lead explained to the forum that she was in the process of creating a hub page for 'what's on' in the district. This would signpost people to existing websites that EDDC supported, but were not hosted by EDDC. Any town or parish councils could be added to the 'what's on'. Annette suggested that members look at the Visit South Devon website which allowed events to be advertised.

On behalf of the forum the Chairman thanked the Environment Service web author for attending the meeting and explaining the 'what's on' hub page.

**\*20 EDDC Countryside team update on project work**

It was agreed to consider this agenda item at the next forum meeting.

**\*21 Future of the Arts and Culture Forum**

The Countryside Service Lead asked the forum to consider how it had evolved and the way that the forum worked, in the absence of an Arts Development Officer. The presentations received demonstrated a huge amount of overlap and common ways of working across different sectors, and a great deal of activity. The forum had the opportunity to explore areas of joint working and identify a critical mass of activities across different sectors. It had a role in helping to support cultural activities in the area.

It was suggested that consideration be given to how future meetings were structured and how the agendas were formulated; around cross cutting themes designed to stimulate more meaningful discussions and create opportunities for collaboration. Bringing together relevant parties could help better resolve resource issues, by working together to help each other and being more proactive.

The Chairman thanked all those present for attending the meeting and gave particular thanks for the presentations that had been given.

**\*22 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Arts and Culture Forum would be confirmed in due course.

**Attendance list**

**Present:**

EDDC Councillors:

Cllr John O’Leary – Culture Champion (Chairman)

Cllr Peter Faithfull

Community representative:

Sally Twiss

Town representatives:

Cllr Kim Bloxham – Cranbrook

Cllr Bruce de Saram - Exmouth

Cllr John Dyson - Sidmouth

Cllr Douglas Hull – Axminster

Cllr Tom Wright – Budleigh Salterton

Officers:

Tim Dafforn, Countryside Team Leader

John Golding, Strategic Lead - Housing, Health and Environment

Annette Ladbrook, Environment Service web author lead

Charlie Plowden, Service Lead – Countryside and Leisure

Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

Also present:

Cllr Paul Diviani – Leader, EDDC

Victoria Harding – South West Museum Programme Manager

Dr Sam Rose – Chief Executive, Jurassic Coast Trust

Tim Smithies – Chief Executive, Carn to Cove

Tim Youngs – AONB Manager

**Apologies:**

Cllr Kim Bloxham - Cranbrook

Cllr Jenny Brown – Tourism Champion, EDDC

Carla Hiley – Exmouth Arts Manager

Cllr Duncan Sheridan-Shaw - Honiton

Graham Whitlock, Manor Pavilion Theatre Manager

Chairman .....

Date.....