

HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (GRANTS) 8th February 2021

MINUTES OF MEETING

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Kath Hey, and Councillors Kenyon (Chair), Boulter, Foxton, Hornsey, Oliver (part), Powell, Stevens, Tillett, Tyler (part) and Wilcox.

In attendance: Steve Kerry Town Clerk, Becci O'Reilly Committees Events and Contracts Officer and presenters of bids as listed under the respective items

CD2020/21.95 CONFIRMATION THAT ALL MEMBERS WERE ABLE TO ACCESS THE MEETING

The Chair confirmed that all members were able to see and hear the proceedings, and that a member who joined later was also able to take part.

CD2020/21.96 CONFIRMATION OF PUBLIC ACCESS

The Committees, Events and Contracts Officer confirmed that the meeting was being live streamed and recorded.

CD2020/21.97 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence, although Councillor Powell indicated that he had a poor connection and if he left the meeting he would be recorded as an apology.

CD2020/21.98 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were none.

CD2020/21.99 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tyler declared a non-pecuniary interest in the Rugby Club application as she has links with the applicants that might give rise to a perception of pre-determination.

The Mayor and Councillor Kenyon declared non-pecuniary interests in the application regarding the Knife Angel as the Mayor is on the Steering Group and Councillor Kenyon has been involved in assisting the applicants to get the project moving. In both cases there might be a perception of pre-determination.

CD2020/21.100 GRANT COMPLETION FORMS

100a Hereford Youth Canoe Club – Paddle Boards

The form was presented and there being no questions or comments it was noted by the committee.

100b South Marches District Scouts – Gang Show

The form was presented and there being no questions or comments it was noted by the committee.

CD2020/21.101 GRANT APPLICATION – HEREFORD YOUTH CANOE CLUB – CANOES

Vic Gamage for the Canoe Club joined the meeting by audio link and apologised that he was not able to establish a video link. He explained that the application was for two large canoes to enable a full offer to the local youth as a number of teenagers were simply too big to be able to use the existing boats. The Club had lost a lot of income this year because of Covid restrictions but bills had still been paid and therefore they needed some assistance to purchase the larger canoes. There were no questions although the Mayor spoke to indicate her support of the application and her appreciation of the importance of encouraging youngsters into outdoor exercise and activity.

It was then proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Boulter and unanimously

RESOLVED To award the Hereford Youth Canoe Club a grant of £1,510.38 for the purchase of two large canoes as stated in the application.

Mr Gamage thanked the Committee for their support and left the meeting.

CD2020/21.102 GRANT APPLICATION – CITY OF HEREFORD SWIMMING CLUB – STARTING BLOCKS

At this point the meeting was running ahead of time and the presenters of the next item on the agenda were not ready. As the presenters for this item were present, it was agreed to vary the order of business.

The Chair welcomed Sandra Gough and Patrick Blake from the Swimming Club to the meeting. It was explained that the application for £3,000 is to install permanent starting blocks at the Hereford swimming pool so that when repairs and works are completed following the floods the venue can be used for the major events the Club puts on. These are able to draw crowds, raise money for the Club and to increase interest in competitive swimming as a form of exercise. It is hoped to be able to do this from November. Membership has dipped from around 230 to 148 at present so renewed activity is important and having the right equipment in place will help that.

In discussion with members a number of points were noted. Swimming is not only good exercise but a vital life skill and should be supported. The application is for three blocks, the quotes are for six, the others the Club is able to fund itself. The slightly more expensive quote is for a more durable product which will be more economical in the long run. There has been no approach to Ross or Leominster Councils as the blocks will be a permanent installation in Hereford. The blocks could be branded with the City Council logo. The blocks can be used by HALO for swimming lessons or by individuals under the supervision of the pool lifeguards.

It was then proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Tillet and unanimously

RESOLVED That a grant of £3,000 be awarded to the City of Hereford Swimming Club for community equipment as stated in the application form.

Ms Gough and Mr Blake thanked the Committee for their support and left the meeting.

CD2020/21.103 LATE ITEM VENNTURE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

This item had been too late for the main agenda. In discussion it was established that members had not had enough time to consider it and it was agreed it would be on the agenda for the routine business meeting of the Committee on 30th March 2021.

CD2020/21.104 LATE ITEM BORDERLINES FILM FESTIVAL

Members were asked to consider if this was a sufficiently straightforward item to be considered having been circulated late. Borderlines were asking for their proposed festival to be entirely an online experience this year and for the original grant purpose to be varied to allow the funds to be used for that. Given that they needed to be able to make firm plans as soon as possible there was a degree of urgency about resolving this question. Members affirmed that they were willing to consider this proposal as a late item.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Tyler and with two abstentions

RESOLVED That the grant to Borderlines for this year's film festival be allowed to cover the costs of an entirely online event this year as a response to Covid restrictions and public health concerns

CD2020/21.105 GRANT APPLICATION – HEREFORDSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION – TALKING FOOTBALL

Alan Darfi from the Herefordshire FA joined the meeting. Mr Darfi gave a short presentation about the work of a county FA and its role in developing grass roots football, including access initiatives such as disability football, walking football etc. Talking football is an initiative to capture people's enthusiasm for talking about the game to tackle social problems such as isolation and loneliness. It is an ambitious project with a large social reach. The programme includes ad hoc educational workshops. He also explained in more details the use of the funds and the fact that the project was compatible with current Covid restrictions so could commence quickly.

In response to comments and questions, the following points were noted. The main costs are the use of the pitch and rooms with something for training materials. "Trainers" referred to are people not footwear. It was noted with some disappointment that the national FA do not appear to be putting anything into this, partly accounted for by the massive drop in their revenues this year; they are in fact cutting subsidies to county FA's just when they are most needed. Mr Darfi has set up Talking Football before, in the West Riding of Yorkshire where it was a great success. It became self-financing after a few years. He will be seeking other funding sources if he is not successful here. Although the Council does not often pay rent or rates within grants it is lawful to do so if members feel a sufficient community benefit would follow.

Councillor Oliver joined the meeting at this point.

The ground referred to is just behind the Lads' Club on Widemarsh Common, where there is a very good 4G pitch. The project could be rolled out to Tupsley and indeed

to other sites across the City and County. It was noted that this proposal sits well with the award winning work of the Men's Mental Health Group that was recently recognised.

It was then proposed by Councillor Kenyon, seconded by Councillor Foxton and with one abstention

RESOLVED That Herefordshire Football Association be awarded a grant of £3,000 for their Talking Football project as set out in the application.

Mr Darfi thanked the Committee and left the meeting.

CD2020/21.106 GRANT APPLICATION – CATCHER MEDIA – MAYFAIR 900

Rick and Julia Goldsmith joined the meeting. Mr Goldsmith showed some of the archive material about the Fair going back to the invention of photography. Although some people avoid the City when it is on, in fact polling indicates it is overwhelmingly popular, and this year is the 900th anniversary of the original fair charter given to Bishop Capella by King Henry I. Covid restrictions on the Fair itself are the great unknown this year. Mr Goldsmith also referred to some previous Catcher Media projects such as Life Through A Lens to show how Herefordshire's history has been captured and presented through pictures.

In response to questions and comments the following points were made. Catcher Media do not run May Fair and have no influence over whether it takes place this year. It seems likely that we will again see the Fair cancelled unless there is a dramatic improvement in the Covid situation soon.

The report is about outdoor showing of images and is Covid compatible. The reference to City Council money already pledged refers to an agreement to use some of the funding left over from the cancelled VE/VJ Day plans for some lamp column banners to advertise the 900th anniversary of May Fair. This was for four additional banners to the seven already planned and funded. The City Council is part of the Organising Group for Mayfair 900 with colleagues from Herefordshire Council and outside bodies.

If the Fair itself is cancelled it would be more important than ever to mark the 900th anniversary and not let that slip by unnoticed. Catcher Media have done great work in the past in using pictures and film to inculcate a greater awareness of, and interest in, local history.

There is scope to slip the dates for the exhibition if Covid rules require that, the dates are currently aligned with Herefordshire Council's Museum Service's programme. Noting that the City Council has the original charter referred to it was important that the town hall be included in any walking trail designed around the anniversary. We have been contacted about using our Love Exploring software to develop such a trail which will certainly include the town hall. Had we not funded the banners already they would have been a part of this grant application.

It was noted that with the crucial R number likely to be hovering still dangerously high, a virtual May Fair and a historical exhibition in the open air was a sound idea, given that the main event might well be postponed. It was noted that Hay Festival has been

cancelled this year already, and it was disappointing that Herefordshire Council had not initiated a conversation about the charter and the town hall as a focal point for the anniversary.

It was then proposed by Councillor Foxton, seconded by Councillor Wilcox and unanimously

RESOLVED That Catcher Media Social CIC be awarded a grant of £2,000 for their Hereford Mayfair 900 project in line with their application.

CD2020/21.107 LARGE GRANT APPLICATION KNIFE ANGEL HEREFORD – STATUE VISIT

As the representatives of Greyhound RFC were not yet present it was agreed to take this item next. Alison Davis and Meryl Cain joined the meeting.

The Chair reminded the Committee that this matter has been before Council already and that Council have resolved to give the Committee an extended authorisation beyond the £3,000 limit, to consider a grant of up to £10,000 to the project provided consideration is given to it being postponed until after September 1st as a result of Covid concerns. Noting that the application to Council had been incomplete some additional information had been provided which the Clerk had delivered to members of the Committee on Monday 1st February.

The presenters briefly updated the Committee on the current status of the application and that the Steering Group was planning to meet in May to decide if a delay from June was required. They were confident that the Steering Group had the right people to make that decision.

A number of members spoke in detail about their concerns regarding this application. The main points noted were as follows.

There is no need to revisit much of the detail which has already been discussed at some length in Council. The identification of Herefordshire in Tier One had been a grave disservice, bringing large numbers of visitors into the county from areas with higher rates of infection and quickly leading to a Covid spike in the county and city. Organising an event so soon after the earliest possible date for outdoor public gatherings to be allowed which was planned to attract 100,000 visitors to the City could be seen as irresponsible and premature. It was noted that other large outdoor events planned for this summer, Royal Welsh Show, Three Counties Show had already been cancelled. There was some disappointment that some of the Steering Group had been openly critical of the Council's caution, and that they did not seem to accept that councillors, especially twin hatted members who also sat on Herefordshire Council, had a public duty to protect health, which other supporters of the project did not share or seem to appreciate.

Although there was general concern about timing, there was also substantial support for the Knife Angel coming to Hereford, and that when it did it was really important that it was a very successful event with a large attendance and a good impact on local tourism and the wider economy. This would not be possible if Covid rules, or public concerns, were still a major factor. Leaving a decision on postponement to May was far too late and this matter needed to be settled now. The impact of a postponement on the availability of the Knife Angel was not known, there were other exhibitions

planned and it might be that Hereford could miss out completely if there no slots available later. However, it is not scheduled anywhere before December 2021 but many towns and cities want it but have not yet produced a draft schedule. Once it stops touring that will be it.

Members discussed the mechanism whereby funds could be held for this project at a later date. The Clerk advised that it would be feasible to pledge up to £10,000 in line with the enlarged Council authorisation to the committee, for that money to be taken from unspent balances at the end of this financial year (where it was known the Council would be underspending because so much activity had been cancelled because of Covid) and placed in an earmarked reserve to be drawn down when the exhibition could be organised. This would mean money would be available in a later financial year without hitting that year's grants budget. It would be important to set out now whether that drawing down would be on the authority of the Clerk or would require a further discussion at this Committee.

After much discussion of possible timing requirements, including a debate about whether to set the earliest time for which the Council would be prepared to support the installation as 1st September 2021 or 1st April 2022, it was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Tyler and, with eight votes in favour, one against and two abstentions it was

RESOLVED

That the sum of £10,000 from balances at the end of this financial year be allocated to an earmarked reserve to support the Knife Angel coming to Hereford in line with the grant application.

That the money not be released before 1st April 2022.

That authority to release the money when the project is ready after that date be delegated to the Clerk.

The Chair thanked Alison Davis and Meryl Cain for the time they have spent at Council and Committee advocating this project, and they left the meeting.

Councillor Tyler apologised that she had to leave for another meeting.

CD2020/21.108 LARGE GRANT APPLICATION – GREYHOUD RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB – GROUNDS EQUIPMENT

Lew Braithwaite from Greyhound RFC attended to present the application. It became apparent that Mr Braithwaite was having difficulty establishing a sound connection, that some members were unable to hear some of what he was saying and that he was not the author of the application and could not answer some of the points members wished to discuss.

Two proposals for an award were suggested but neither was seconded. Given the ongoing difficulties with the discussion, and in order to give the Club a fair opportunity to present their application properly, to have their treasurer present to support it, and thereby to enable the Committee to have the fullest information on which to base a decision, it was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Powell and with seven votes in favour, two against and one abstention it was

RESOLVED That this application be deferred until the next meeting of this Committee and that it be placed on the agenda for 30th March 2021.

CD2020/21.109 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEEITNGS

Greyhound RFC large grant application 30th March 2021

Vennture SLA proposal 30th March 2021

Technical improvements to the IT based grant application software

CD2020/21.110 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 30th March 2021 Routine Business (and one large grant)

Monday 19th April 2021 Grants Meeting

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 12.20pm

Signed

Date