

## HEREFORD CITY COUNCIL

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS COMMITTEE 6 MARCH 2023

#### MINUTES OF MEETING

**Present** Councillor Sue Boulter (Chair) and Councillors Brian Wilcox, Kath Hey, Rob Owens, Cat Hornsey, Aubrey Oliver and Paul Stevens

**Attending** Steve Kerry Town Clerk and Dave Tristram External Funding and Community Support Officer

#### **CD2022/23.67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were noted from Councillors Ange Tyler and Rob Williams.

#### **CD2022/23.68 SUBSTITUTIONS**

None.

#### **CD2022/23.69 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Owens declared a pecuniary interest in the grant application from the Wildlife Trust as he is a part-time employee of that Trust.

#### **CD2022/23.70 GRANT COMPLETION FORMS**

Noted that grant completion forms had been received from SSAFA for the Can You Hear Me concert, Herefordshire Lore for Reaching Out and the Wildlife Trust for the Yazor Brooks' Restoration Project. There were no questions, and the reports were accepted.

It was also noted that too many organisations are only sending in completion forms from their previous grants when they wish to apply for funding again. The EF&CD Officer confirmed that there was now a three month limit from the completion of the project on the delivery of these forms.

There were no annual or service level agreement reports to consider at this meeting.

#### **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

#### **CD2022/23.71 ACCESSIBLE HEREFORDSHIRE – SHOPMOBILITY HEREFORD CITY – £3,000**

The Chair welcomed Vicky Nicolson-James and colleagues to the meeting and invited them to present their application.

This project was started because of a lack of accessible information for people requiring assistance as tourists or shoppers with moving around Hereford and entering premises. They have met our TIC Information Officer who refers people to them, who have queries of this nature. If they had a shopmobility facility at the Town Hall with parking, they would be able to offer a much better service. This will increase purchasing and when put in these terms, businesses are interested in making premises more accessible. They are being supported by Herefordshire Mobility re storage of equipment and this will include servicing. Post COVID demand is rising, and the Holme Lacy Road location is not ideal. They will deliver to the Warner Hotel in Holme Lacy but not to other sites. It was noted that there is no room at the Town Hall for equipment, still less for scooters. Another company who was supposed to take over from Shopmobility have not done much and their website does not refer to the service at all.

In discussions the following points were noted. We used to support Shopmobility at Maylords, which is now owned by Herefordshire Council, and the City Council do not own the Town Hall. The TIC is not a separate organisation, it is part of the City Council. It can, and does, provide information and points of contact for all sorts of tourism and visitor queries. The groups have spoken to hvoss

and looked into some empty shop premises but no serious discussions yet. Was this coming in the wrong order? Did the premises and storage issues need to be resolved before there was a viable project to fund? If the previous scheme from Maylords failed, why was that? If it was because of low demand, where was the evidence that this new version would be self-financing with a good customer base? The EF&CD Officer would help with locating suitable premises, either through Herefordshire Council or another body. Finally, it was noted that no decision has been made yet about child buggies and other equipment for people with disabled children.

The Chair thanked the group for attending.

#### **CD2022/23.72 HEREFORDSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST – WILD ABOUT PLAY - £2,994.80**

Having declared an interest, Councillor Owens left the meeting at this point.

The Chair welcomed Julia Morton who showed a video presentation in support of the application. Wildplay has been operating across the County for some 20 years, and encourages children to build confidence, teamwork, and nature awareness as they learn by experience in family groups. They like to go close to where the children live to find the wild nature in the back yard, including on estates which might be thought not to have much interesting wildlife. There is a dearth of activity in the City. They have worked with many parishes and have a good track record, which they would like to build on with our funding.

In further discussions the following points were noted. The Trust have done a lot of great work on the Yazor Brooks and other waterways, could this be included in the play sites; yes it can. Although the group have locations and groups in mind to work with, they are very open to other suggestions. When they find a good location they are keen to use them again and again.

At this point Councillor Hey realised she had a non-pecuniary interest, which she declared and confirmed she would abstain in any voting on this proposal.

What they had done at the Quarry had been excellent, and the advantages of taking kids out of the classroom for education by experience were very clear. Could special needs be accommodated: yes, as the children come in family groups, so to the extent the family can support the special need it can be accommodated by the organisers in partnership with them. The Rangers have Level Three Play Leader Certificates, enhanced DBS checks and Forest School training. Of 940 children attending sessions last year, these were in Leominster, Ledbury and at Eastnor during the festival, in future they will be on City sites such as Belmont Country Park, the Quarry again and Aylestone Park. It is good to focus on the river and canal because of the variety of wildlife to be found, and to engage children with the importance of the health of the river. The service is free to access for parents and there will be full recognition of any support the Council gives.

The Chair thanked Julia Morton for her presentation and for answering the questions. Councillor Owens re-entered the meeting at this point.

#### **CD2022/23.73 HEREFORDSHIRE LORE – HEREFORD LOCAL HISTORY DAY - £3,000**

The Chair welcomed Bill Laws to the meeting and invited him to present the application.

Herefordshire Lore has been supported by the City Council in the past, in 1989 and 2021. They publish the magazine called In Our Age (copies were available for members). The proposal is for an event, probably at HARC, focussing on the history of the media in Herefordshire, including 127 issues of In Our Age. There are lots of local history groups but not much on broad themes like this, it tends to be very place specific. Originally they had hoped to hold this at Castle Green but the Pavilion is likely to be under scaffolding by then and not available.

In further discussion the following points were noted. It would be better to have a more central location than HARC if possible, Castle Green had been a very good idea. It would be good to emphasise media coverage of the Belgian refugees and their welcome here in the light of comments about the proposed use of Three Counties Hotel as a refugee hostel. The Group do visit schools and the Sixth Form College when they have an invitation, and hard copies of In Our Age are still widely available although it is also now accessible digitally. They haven't yet, but will now, keep the TIC informed of their events and exhibitions. Finally, Mr Laws advised that this would not go ahead unless they were able to fund a co-ordinator as the volunteers simply did not have the additional time and capacity required.

The Chair thanked Mr Laws for his presentation and the copies of In Our Age.

#### **CD2022/23.74 SOUTH HEREFORD CAR CLUB – SOUTH HEREFORD BRANCH – £2,000**

The Chair welcomed Maggie Setterfield and Robin Coates to the meeting and invited them to present their application.

This is sponsored by the Malvern Hills Car Club who have 20 cars and around 200 members, having started in 2009. Every car they have reduces car ownership tenfold. Eighteen months ago they obtained funds from Herefordshire Council to start five car clubs which should be self-financing at the end of that. This would not happen in South Hereford, hence the application for a grant to tide them over until they do become self-financing. There are currently eight members sharing one car, with two more likely to join very shortly. Mr Coates drew a contrast with the St James' car club which arose because of concern about parking and the South Wye venture which is more about affordability in an area of very low incomes. They are not prepped to join forces or resources with St James' Car Club because they have different operating and administrative procedures. All their membership is Hinton and Hunderton or Newton Farm, although one member lives in Ryelands Street and uses the club car as a second vehicle.

In further discussions the following points were noted. There are eight members in the City today, and they need about twelve to make it viable. Belmont Rural were not offering any support for this. If there is only one car, what happens if more than one person wants it on a given day – they have to take a train to Malvern to pick up the second car that might be available. If the membership drive is very successful how would they access a second vehicle permanently, through Grants for All who have funded purchases before, or by using additional vehicles from other clubs, again in Malvern. They don't buy new cars, they buy second hand for about £5,000 and run them for ten years. In addition to grants, they fund purchases from an operating surplus. Out of their total of twenty cars, eight of them are electric and there is one seven seater.

Malvern Club cannot subsidise the projected loss in South Hereford of £2,000, although there is a subsidy arrangement in operation for Ledbury who are also facing the same 18 month cut off on Herefordshire Council funding. The current operating loss in Hereford is thought to be around £2,900.

The Chair thanked Mr Coates and Ms Setterfield for their presentation.

#### **CD2022/23.75 LIFE AND SOUL KITCHEN – CREDENHILL RESOURCE CENTRE – £2,883.58**

The Chair welcomed Sophie Badham and her colleague Jenny to the meeting and invited them to present their application.

The group are a registered charity with the aim of helping disabled people to reach their full potential. The project is a social training kitchen garden and café, plus signposting to other services and sources of help. The aim is to help people to be community leaders. The colleagues want to develop an inclusive sensory play area free, and open to the public and to address the cost of living

crisis. The project includes specific equipment for people with a variety of needs, maintained by adults with learning difficulties. Raised beds and pathways are needed, but these are already covered with other funding. This application is for specialised equipment for the garden.

In March 2020 the scheme was closed by COVID, in March 2021 it re-opened in Three Elms but on an upper floor. In March 2021 negotiations with the landlord and the head landlord (Herefordshire Council) for the ground floor failed, Herefordshire offered some of the ground floor of Maylords as a temporary provision but that is no longer available. Therefore, some 50 plus disabled service users have no home for their project. Credenhill PC offered accommodation up to April 2023 when they will enter into a ten year lease. They would still like to open a second site in the City itself. All employees and service users are city residents. Six thousand, four hundred hours of volunteering time will be supported by this grant. Having been founded in Hereford, the group are very keen to get back there and have spoken with Barrs Court School and St David's as well as the RNC.

In further discussions the following points were noted. Councillor Hornsey reported that her three brothers, who have varying degrees of disability, had all found employment after volunteering at the kitchen. Her children have also visited and enjoyed it. There would still be an incentive to get back into the City if the grant was given as the Credenhill facility is limited to 50 people. A lot of staff and users don't drive and as a Hereford organisation they feel it is vital to have a place in the City. Although only two directors and one trustee are shown in official documents at present this is in transition as some new trustees have not yet been registered. The operating loss shown was the result of a triple whammy of doubling rent, the national minimum wage going up and food prices escalating alarmingly. This would be contained in future years but had been a fiscal shock when it happened. The impossibility of remaining at Maylords was a real shame but they are in talks with an owner about premises in the city that would need quite a lot of refurbishment. Despite all the problems, they remain the cheapest provider of whole day care for people with disabilities and haven't increased their fees since 2018.

The Chair thanked Sophie and Jenny for their presentation.

#### **CD2022/23.76 THE ORCHESTRA OF THE SWAN – CAFÉ MUSE – £3,000**

The Chair welcomed Natasha Green and Sue Pope and invited them to present their application.

The group are a regional chamber orchestra based originally in Stratford upon Avon, now in Warwick. They used to do concerts for people with dementia in care homes but have recently had a residency at the Courtyard for the same purpose. This had just started when COVID stopped everything. During the pandemic they learned how to deliver music online by video – the feedback was good but everyone looked forward to face to face contact again. They came up with the Café Muse idea as part of the post COVID restart. From a military and personal development background, Natasha had focused on veteran work from the original focus on dementia sufferers. There are about 30 participants supported by a Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps nurse and Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association volunteers and reservist musicians. The group meet for music, but it is the catalyst for wider social events and activities. Some participants have performed at the Waterworks Museum, the Cathedral and in the Courtyard Foyer.

In further discussions the following points were noted. Councillor Hey had seen how, in his recent illness, her father's love of music had been lost and would love him to be able to access something like this as part of his recovery. The group replied that although their initial focus had been on dementia, this had widened to PTSD, especially among veterans, but other mental health issues are supported too. The group mixes well and there is a lot of mutual support, the players also get a lot more out of it now there is face to face contact with a live, and very appreciative audience.

The Chair thanked Natasha and Sue for their presentation.

## CD2022/23.77 RESOLUTIONS

### a) Accessible Herefordshire

Members felt this had been a rather confused application and more information was needed. In passing it was noted that no-one at Herefordshire Council seems to hold a list of available properties and the Clerk was asked to enquire into this as it had been a very useful resource in the past for all sorts of groups.

It as proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Boulter and unanimously

**RESOLVED To defer a decision on this grant until a fuller business case and resolution of outstanding queries was available at a future meeting.**

### b) Herefordshire Wildlife Trust

Councillor Owens left the meeting at this point.

Members felt that this had been running very successfully for some time and we would be very keen to see their activities spreading across the City, as had been discussed with the applicants.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Hornsey and (with Councillor Hey abstaining having declared a non-pecuniary interest)

**RESOLVED To award Herefordshire Wildlife Trust a grant of £2,994.80 to support the Wild About Play project, with a specific request that they seek to deliver events both north and south of the river.**

Councillor Owens re-entered the meeting.

### c) Herefordshire Lore

There was some concern about the location of the proposed Local History Day at HARC as it is not very accessible, however it was noted that the group had tried to locate at Castle Green.

It was proposed by Councillor Hornsey, seconded by Councillor Owens and unanimously

**RESOLVED To award a grant to Herefordshire Lore of £3,000 for their Hereford Local History Day and to urge them to continue to seek a more central location than HARC for their event.**

### d) Life and Soul Kitchen

Members expressed disappointment that Herefordshire Council had not been more helpful, especially in the discussion that might have seen the group retaining premises in Three Elms. However the presentation had been excellent and this was clearly a very sound project. The Committee would welcome an application in the future for facilities in the City and the request for officers to follow up with Herefordshire Council the question of vacant property register was reiterated.

It was proposed by Councillor Hey, seconded by Councillor Hornsey and unanimously

**RESOLVED To award a grant of £2,883.58 to Life and Soul Kitchen for their Credenhill Resource Centre project and to encourage them to seek premises in the City for their second site.**

**e) South Hereford Car Club**

With only eight people involved with one car and a backup only available after a train ride to Malvern, members did not see that this was addressing low income and affordability of transport very effectively. The refusal to work with St James' and Bartonsham was not satisfactorily explained and is inhibiting the usefulness of this project. The EF&CD Officer added that he had advised them on what to bring with them to support their application and to ask their supporter Councillor Tillett, who had some useful information to offer, with them but they had not done so. This had not helped the presentation.

It was proposed by Councillor Wilcox, seconded by Councillor Stevens and unanimously

**RESOLVED That no grant be awarded in respect of this application as it does not appear to be a viable long term project.**

**f) The Orchestra of the Swan**

Members felt this had been an excellent presentation for a very good project.

It was proposed by Councillor Stevens, seconded by Councillor Hey and unanimously

**RESOLVED That a grant of £3,000 be awarded to The Orchestra of the Swan for their Café Muse project.**

**CD2022/23.78 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 5 June at 10am.

The Clerk reminded members that as this would be the first meeting after the Council elections and the appointment of a new Committee by Council on 24 May, the first business would be the election of a Chair and Vice Chair for the municipal year. This would not wait for the next general agenda, it was the first business at the first meeting, even though this was a grants agenda.

The Chair noted that, as they are not seeking re-election, this was the last meeting with Councillors Oliver and Wilcox and she thanked them for their many years on the Committee. In turn they thanked Councillor Boulter for chairing meetings for several years. All expressions of thanks were endorsed by all present.

Signed .....

Date .....