

CREATIVE DARLINGTON BOARD

Monday 23 November 2015 at 3.00pm
Town Hall, Darlington

MINUTES

Present:

Laura Case
John Dean
Sharon Paterson (chaired meeting)
Seth Pearson
Stephen Wiper

Apologies:

Martin Barkley
Ada Burns
Bill Vince
Councillor Nick Wallis
Lynda Winstanley

1. Minutes of last meeting

1.1 Minutes were accepted as a true and fair reflection of the meeting, outstanding actions not covered elsewhere in the minutes are shown below.

1.2 **Action 1:** Creative Darlington Manager to invite chair of Darlington Borough Council's scrutiny group with responsibility for Culture, Councillor Bob Carson, to attend the next Creative Darlington board meeting as an observer.

Action 2: Laura Case to circulate link to the film of consultation work to engage children in Darlington with the design of Theatre Hullaballoon.

Action 3: Creative Darlington Manager to organise dates for board meetings in 2016.

Action 4: Creative Darlington Manager to add Risk as an agenda item to following Creative Darlington board meetings.

2. Creative Darlington development and engagement with One Darlington

2.1 Creative Darlington board development was discussed. No new chair has been identified. The board held a single item meeting in June 2016 focusing on capital development work (Darlington Civic Theatre and Theatre Hullaballoon). The board noted the importance of maintaining momentum in progressing the Creative Darlington vision.

2.2 Sharon Paterson has acted as interim chair of meetings for a considerable period. Sharon Paterson advised that she was happy to be considered as the full chair going forward subject to this being agreed at the next full board meeting.

2.3 **Action 5:** Creative Darlington Manager to add appointment of chair to agenda of Spring 2016 board meeting, board members to decide.

2.4 It was agreed that it is important to build momentum in addressing our strategic priorities (audience development and retention during the capital work on theatres, 2025).

- 2.5 **Action 6:** Chair of Creative Darlington board and Creative Darlington Manager to co-ordinate meetings with individual board members following the Spring 2016 board meeting.
- 2.6 One Darlington led a successful *Darlington: A Culture of Ingenuity* Assembly event on 19 October 2015 which attracted a significant audience (Creative Darlington programmed live performances during the event). The importance of easy access workspace and opportunities to develop creative enterprise emerged as a theme. Follow up questions have been posed following the Assembly online to encourage further debate.
- 2.7 While the Council does not have control of a lot of vacant/empty buildings Creative Darlington has discussed an opportunity to address this concern in part through a time limited programme (3 – 6 months) of access to spaces within the indoor market. Creative Darlington might support another artist or organisation in fundraising to progress activity.
- 2.8 **Action 7:** Creative Darlington Manager to meet with Darlington for Culture and Darlington Borough Council market service and support fundraising to progress a campaign to highlight opportunities to utilise empty space within the indoor market creatively.
- 2.9 The Bonnar Keenleyside report recommended holding wider Forum events to address particular issues and involve stakeholders. Creative Darlington will organise an event exploring the space issue for creative enterprise and arts practice in March 2016, with a wider Forum event suggested by the board as part of Darlington Arts Festival 2016, which might consider the current state of arts provision in Darlington post transition following closure of Darlington Arts Centre.
- 2.10 **Action 8:** Creative Darlington Manager to programme Forum event in March 2016 focused on workspace.
- 2.11 **Action 9:** Creative Darlington Manager to programme a further Forum event in May 2016 around 'how do we best take the arts sector forward in Darlington with a weaker public sector and empower it more to succeed and benefit Darlington'.

3 Civic Theatre and Hullaballoon capital programme update and audience development discussion

- 3.1 The board agreed to consider audience development and retention work during the capital programmes at a future meeting.
- 3.2 Laura Case provided an update on the work Theatre Hullabaloo has undertaken to progress their stage 2 application to Arts Council England's capital programme, which is expected to be submitted around the end of November 2015. The Civic Theatre stage 2 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund is expected to be submitted by early December 2015. John Dean advised Darlington for Culture is working with the Council and theatre to

develop a joint arts and culture volunteer's initiative, which should benefit ongoing operation once the capital work is complete.

4. Programmes and Festivals update

- 4.1 Various board members had attended Festival of Thrift 2015, which attracted an estimated attendance of 45,000 and has been nominated for a North East Tourism award. Creative Darlington offered support of £15,000 to Festival of Thrift 2015, a first payment of £13,500 has been made with the final payment of £1,500 to be paid on receipt of an evaluation report on the Festival.
- 4.2 John Dean advised Darlington for Culture will organise Darlington Arts Festival 2016 and collect copy for the new programme by early Spring 2016. Darlington for Culture thanked Creative Darlington for allocated finance to support marketing and promotion of Darlington Arts Festival since its inception. Creative Darlington has allocated £1,500 to support marketing and promotion of Darlington Arts Festival 2016.
- 4.3 **Action 10:** Creative Darlington Manager to provide Darlington for Culture with an order number on which to invoice for £1,500 support to invoice for marketing/promotion costs for Darlington Arts Festival 2016.
- 4.4 Stephen Wiper presented a request from Jabberwocky Market for £5,000 covering the period between 2016 and 2019 beyond spring 2016. Creative Darlington has committed £5,000 in total to support Jabberwocky Market activity between October 2013 and Spring 2016. The Jabberwocky Markets have been part of the Battersea Arts Centre led Collaborative Touring Network, which has received a Strategic Touring Programme award from Arts Council England and considerable additional support from major trusts and foundations. Stephen Wiper advised he understood Jabberwocky Market was likely to remain part of the Collaborative Touring Network and in his view was developing well and of high quality. Support for the 2016 – 2019 is sought to develop residencies and expected to lever in additional finance. The board members attending the meeting felt it was sensible to allocate a similar level of support provided other board members had the opportunity to vote by e-mail. It was suggested Jabberwocky Market could utilise additional expertise in assessing the quality of recipients for any residency/producing opportunities which would be supported by any future award.
- 4.5 **Action 11:** Creative Darlington Manager to seek further information from Jabberwocky Market re how quality would be assessed in selecting those who might be supported from any further award and more detail on how the budget would be utilised, and then ask Creative Darlington board members by e-mail to decide on request for £5,000 support from Creative Darlington.

5. 2025 priorities in terms of legacy for Darlington

- 5.1 The Tees Valley Culture Task and Finish Group recommendation for the Tees Valley to bid to become UK City of Culture 2025 has been announced, with the bi-centenary of the first passenger railway journey of Locomotion No. 1 on the Stockton & Darlington railway likely to be central to any proposal.

Discussion considered the importance of presenting opportunities clearly to people in Darlington and making them relevant. It was recognised the railway element was likely to attract significant national and international attention, particularly from rail enthusiasts.

- 5.2 The importance of breaking down the journey and keeping people engaged was recognised, given 2025 may appear a long way off. It is expected applications may need to be submitted for UK City of Culture by 2021, although the bidding process may have taken c. 18 months in the past, with a decision on which application has been successful made shortly thereafter.
- 5.3 It was recognised that there may be challenges in local authorities working together and in destination management for the Tees Valley, although progress around the combined authority proposal despite a tight deadline and appetite to build destination management capacity are encouraging.
- 5.4 Sharon Paterson advised Darlington had been recognised by Arts Council England at several events, including the presentation of the Case for Culture at Westminster, attended by Ed Vaizey, Minister of State for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, as a good example of the way to work in partnership with the arts in a challenging funding environment.
- 5.5 The board recognised there were still opportunities to further develop and present culture as a driver of regeneration in Darlington and that we must not fall short in our aspirations for 2025.

6. Any Other Business

- 6.1 Seth Pearson advised of progress in taking forward the proposal to stage an Ingenious Darlington fair in the centre of Darlington, working with local businesses, which is expected to take place in early summer 2016. The proposal provides a great opportunity to showcase some of Darlington's innovative businesses and to encourage people to consider engagement with the STEM professions. Excellent links with business already developed through the Foundation for Jobs will support the proposal.
- 6.2 The Creative Darlington Manager updated the board re Creative Darlington's risks, particularly financial risk, given the government settlement for 2016/17 may impact on the overall Council budget.

7 Activity Report

- 7.1 Paper presented for information. No queries were raised by the board.

8. Progress against action plan

- 8.1 Paper presented for information. No queries were raised by the board.

9. Budget update

- 9.1 Paper presented for information. No queries were raised by the board.