

Georges Guildhall and Creative Hub Community and Stakeholder Group

Meeting Minutes

Date 12 th May 2021	Location	Via MS Teams
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Attendees	Apologies
<p>Cllr Miss Lesley Bambridge, Ward Member</p> <p>Cllr Francis Bone, Ward Member</p> <p>Cllr Mrs Elizabeth Nockolds, Ward Member</p> <p>Michael De Whalley, West Norfolk Disability Information Service</p> <p>Michael Baldwin, Chair & Town Deal Board Vice Chair</p> <p>Duncan Hall, Assistant Director Housing, Regeneration & Place, BCKLWN</p> <p>Jemma Curtis, Regeneration Programmes Manager, BCKLWN</p> <p>Mark Fuller, Principal Project Surveyor, BCKLWN</p> <p>Hannah Wooller, Managing Director Hudson Architects</p> <p>Marion Catlin, CultureShift – Cultural Development Consultant</p> <p>Doreen Leventhall, King’s Lynn Town Guides</p> <p>Adrian Parker, Friends of St Nicholas Chapel</p> <p>Ivor Rowlands, King’s Lynn Community Cinema Club</p> <p>Alastair Inskip, Creative Hub Stakeholder</p> <p>Dr Julian Litten, St Margarets and St Nicholas Ward Forum</p> <p>Amanda Arterton, West Norfolk Gilbert and Sullivan Society</p> <p>Ema Holman, Creative Hub Stakeholder</p> <p>David Nash, King’s Lynn Operatic and Dramatic Society</p> <p>Anne Roberts, West Norfolk Artists Association</p> <p>Nick Balaam, Vice Chair King’s Lynn Preservation Trust</p> <p>Michael Hankinson, Creative Hub Stakeholder</p> <p>Andrew Jarvis, King's Lynn Shakespeare Festival</p> <p>Wendy Fisher, King’s Lynn Players</p> <p>Colin Clifton, Shakespeare’s Guildhall Trust</p> <p>Andrew Jarvis, Creative Hub Stakeholder</p>	<p>Natalie Jode (Creative Arts East)</p> <p>Rachael Williams (Stories of Lynn / Kick the Dust)</p> <p>Harry Seaton</p> <p>Liam Hind</p> <p>Rachel Drury (Collusion)</p>

Minutes	Actions
<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>1.1 Michael Baldwin welcomed everybody to the meeting and introduced guest speaker from Hudson Architects Hannah Wooller.</p> <p>1.2 Jemma Curtis asked for permission from members to record the meeting at the request of Rachal Drury who is unable to attend, the group agreed to the meeting being recorded.</p> <p>1.3 Ivor Rowland asked if the chat could be recorded along with the meeting but this was not possible.</p> <p>1.4 Adrian Parker asked if queries submitted to the Vison KL email inbox would be responded to and how this would happen.</p> <p>1.5 Michael Baldwin explained that Jemma Curtis and Louise Godfrey were collating the queries and he would circulate responses.</p> <p>1.6 Ivor Rowlands asked about the progress of the online forum, Michael Baldwin explained that investigations were underway and Jemma Curtis mentioned that she was in discussions with the councils ICT department to see if MS Teams could be open for members of the group. She would try and arrange this as soon as possible. Michael Baldwin then explained that everything would then be uploaded to MS Teams for group members to access at any time.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of previous meeting – 14th April 2021 Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and no changes were required.</p>	
<p>3. Creative Hub Feasibility study presentation – Hannah Wooller, Hudson Architects & Marion Catlin</p> <p>3.1 Marion Catlin gave some background context to the feasibility study and explained that the work for the study was conducted in 2018-2019, there has been a lot of changes throughout the time of the report, but Marion explained that they had imbedded themselves in King’s Lynn and therefore the study was not conducted at ‘arm’s length’. She mentioned that when they were coming to the end of the report the Future High Streets Fund was introduce.</p> <p>3.2 Marion explained that at the time St Georges Guildhall was specifically excluded from the study and that Hudson Architects were asked not to include it in their work. She then introduced Hannah Wooller to give the presentation.</p>	

<p>3.3 Colin Clifton enquired as to why St Georges Guildhall was not included in the bids and what was the alternative plan for St Georges Guildhall. Hannah explained that they were outside consultants and that they were working with the brief provided to them. She explained that the Borough Council would need to explain that. Colin requested that Michael investigate.</p> <p>3.4 Hannah Wooller explained that their report was looking at the need for a Creative Hub in King's Lynn.</p> <p>3.5 Michael Baldwin has written all the queries down and will respond to any questions in due course.</p> <p>3.6 Ivor Rowlands mentioned that the brief was issued many years ago and the Guildhall was not included, he asked what the report might look like now that the Guildhall does seem to be within the scope.</p> <p>3.7 Hannah mentioned that the study does not include the Guildhall, however following some commentary, she could give her opinion on how things may have been different had they considered the Guildhall, however she reiterates that the report is from 2 years ago. Marion explained that if they were working on the Guildhall, the study would have been approached in a different manner and that the purpose of this presentation was to bring members 'up to speed' on the conclusion and findings at the time.</p> <p>3.8 Hannah Wooller and Marion Catlin proceeded with the presentation from Hudson Architects.</p> <p>3.9 Colin Clifton thanked Hannah and Marion for the presentation. He believes the Guildhall offers an opportunity for people involved in the arts, culture side etc, but also believes there is an opportunity for universities, various university's want to use the Guildhall specifically for their Shakespeare modules and there is an opportunity from Key Stage 2 upwards to utilise the Guildhall, it's a large area which doesn't appear to be incorporated a in the report. Marion explains that it is just a precise into the report and that there is an idea of progression and progression routes, however reiterated that the report did not examine the Guildhall.</p> <p>3.10 Amanda Arterton because we only have the Guildhall and Creative hub and not the whole complex, if there is no money coming into the theatre from some of the creative industries that can sell and bring people into the courtyard, you need bigger spaces for teaching, the net needs to be spread wider to make the idea sustainable. HW The White barn is a small building, but creative hubs do</p>	
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not generate money, they will create interest and footfall in the area, but they need support and capacity building. Amanda Arterton asks what else might be there to generate money, Hannah explains this is outside of the remit of the report.

- 3.11 Ivor Rowlands stated that the insight Hannah and Marion have provided is interesting, but that the Guildhall and Creative Hub should not be seen as separate and that the creative industries should work together for viability.
- 3.12 Michael Baldwin asks members to hold their questions until the end of the presentation.
- 3.13 Hannah Wooller continues with the presentation.
- 3.14 Michael Baldwin thanked Hannah and Marion for their presentation and invited questions.
- 3.15 Colin stated that the presentation provided a comprehensive view at a time pre-Covid and that it didn't include the Guildhall but he agreed that the town required several creative hubs and that segmentation was required for the Guildhall for performance and music etc. He stated that he believes the location to the rear of the complex would be ideal for students to collaborate and there is a great opportunity to use Guildhall for arts and culture.
- 3.16 Marion said that whilst the report didn't examine the Guildhall, there was an appendices included in the report to look at the complex as a whole although this didn't explore the viability of the site. She questioned whether the Trust had the capacity to raise funding and Colin responded with the opportunity of educational funding.
- 3.17 Adrian Parker explained his background in Planning and that he was interested in the White Barn capacity for weight bearing and explained that there would need to be steel supports within the walls and this would be a great expense and therefore best use can't be made of the northern part of the building. He continued with servicing and mentioned the small courtyard and whether servicing the building could be controlled. He also enquired about the location of parking for the public and visitors.
- 3.18 Anne Roberts agreed with Colin Clifton that Debenhams building is a good space and enquired about plans for this building, she went on to state that there are no places available in King's Lynn for visual artists and that King's Lynn was not a place for selling art. She mentioned that the Greyfriars Art Space had been

successful, however this was no longer functioning and that artists needed affordable space. Marion agreed that this was a good example of what could be achieved as the owner of the Art Space was using it as a 'meanwhile space' not as a commercial space. She mentioned the current high demand for pottery and sewing crafts but said that these industries required space and support and that property owners in the area needed to be nurtured to allow this.

3.19 Ivor Rowlands said that artists have been asking for assistance but there were no empty spaces being offered and empty shops in King's Lynn were owned by companies in London.

3.20 Alistair Inskip thanked Hannah and Marion for the presentation but stated that lots had changed in the 3 years since the study was undertaken and that the Creative Hub should not be used as an excuse to find a use for the White Barn, he stated that the facilities were inappropriate, that the Technology sector was not represented and that there were existing groups which could make use of the building. He mentioned that the Customs House would be perfect and also raised the former Post Office building as an ideal space for a creative hub.

3.21 Michael Baldwin thanked Alistair Inskip.

3.22 Colin Clifton agreed with Alistair and asked of the plans for the Customs House and former Post Office, he agreed that the Guildhall has potential but other building may be more appropriate and reiterated the potential of the Guildhall for educational purposes and said that it shouldn't be used for just arts and crafts.

3.23 Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds explained to the group that a lot of repair work had been undertaken in the Customs House and there is already a plan in place for this building for after Easter when it may be open to the public.

3.24 Marion stated that although the report was not totally in the past, more work would be required and research into demand would be needed, she said that young people are already likely to have an office/studio where they can work so the offer would have to be 'swanky' or prestige to encourage them to move from their current location. Her belief is that King's Lynn would be more than capable to sustaining more than one creative hub and that this would encourage more visitors to the town, however there would need to be a firm strategy in place to get the vision from where it is now to where it needs to be.

3.25 Colin commented on the minutes of the advisory group and was 'delighted' to see that there is agreement on the vision going forward. The guildhall has

stewards as well as well as directors and the objective is to maintain the integrity of the Guildhall in perpetuity. The advisory group appear to have a common vision with SGT and Tim Fitzhigham, a member of SGT is pushing the case for the Guildhall, there is a clear definition of what is trying to be achieved, why create another charitable organisation? He asks that the group brings together work already undertaken by SGT rather than starting again.

- 3.26 Jemma Curtis suggests that what Hannah Wooller idea was not to start again and that all the work undertaken to date helps with understanding of how can that inform the overall vision and business case for funding. She acknowledges the body of work undertaken by SGT and wants to bring all of the opportunities together and help create the robust details for the business case for the funding to bring it to fruition. Funding from the Universities would be great and it needs to be bought together.
- 3.27 Ivor Rowlands, the creative hub, how appropriate is it that we have a forum to talk about the Guildhall and creative hub as one, and whilst there may be some overlap the focus of the people in this group appear to be focused on the Guildhall and not on the creative hub which could be anywhere else and much larger than could be accommodated at the guildhall. The advisory group minutes only refer to the guildhall, are the groups split with the advisory group looking at the Guildhall and the Stakeholder group looking at the creative hub?
- 3.28 Ivor reinforced Colin Clifton in terms of why it may not be appropriate to start again isn't necessarily in terms of the thinking that needs to be done, but in the formation of another CIO when the SGT already has a CIO with three years of experience.
- 3.29 Michael Baldwin said that the creative hub wasn't deliberately left off of the minutes, it was an error which will be amended. He will respond to Ivors other query later.
- 3.30 Colin Clifton – Reinforce his personal vision for the Guildhall, it represents a golden opportunity for education, and it will bring young people into King's Lynn who will then want to use other facilities in the town centre. It will assist in improving the awareness and tourism and the perception of King's Lynn as a 'go to town'.
- 3.31 Julian Litten stated that the Guildhall and Creative hub should be complimentary but this doesn't mean that they need to share a space and the GH should be for performing arts, a youth theatre workshop. The former Post Office would be an ideal location for a creative hub with exhibition space and cafeteria space and it's

<p>central. Could even provide accommodation where the rental would assist in the maintenance of the property.</p> <p>3.32 Colin respects what was mentioned but doesn't see the GH limited to just the arts, needs lighting, sound engineers, that's where the promotion is lacking, the colleges and universities would be delighted to use the space for this type of education, not just the performing arts, it's the science behind the performances also.</p> <p>3.33 Julian clarifies that when he says performing arts, it does include all those ancillary elements too.</p> <p>3.34 Michael Baldwin thanked Marion Catlin for her presentation, Marion offered to join further meetings if required to discuss more.</p>	
<p>4. Any other business. None.</p>	
<p>5. Next Steps</p> <p>5.1 Next session will be discussions around today's meeting, a further meeting will be arranged for two weeks time.</p> <p>5.2 Colin offered to give a presentation from SGT and mentions his YouTube channel</p> <p>5.3 Michael Baldwin agreed to a 15 minute presentation by SGT at the next meeting</p> <p>5.4 Adrian Parker expressed concerns that Jemma Curtis referred to putting in an EOI to the Heritage Lottery Fund without the group's consultation, however Michael Baldwin assured him that the group would be consulted prior to the EOI being submitted.</p>	
<p>Meeting closed 17:37</p>	