

CULTURAL COMMITTEE

At a Hybrid Special Meeting of the Cultural Committee held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Friday, 18 February 2022 at 10.02 a.m.

Present: Bailie Denis Agnew and Councillors Jonathan McColl, John Millar and Brian Walker.

Attending: Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities, George Hawthorn, Manager of Democratic and Registration Services; Alan Douglas, Manager of Legal Services; Joe Reilly, Business Partner – Resources; Michelle Lynn, Assets Coordinator; Sarah Christie, Team Lead Heritage and Arts; and Ashley MacIntyre and Lynn Straker, Committee Officers.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Provost William Hendrie.

Bailie Denis Agnew in the Chair

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS

Bailie Agnew, Chair, advised that he had an urgent motion on Acquisition of Artwork by Alison Watt to be considered. The Committee agreed to accept the item and advised that it would be dealt with after the business shown on the agenda.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

RECORDING OF VOTES

The Committee agreed that all votes taken during the meeting would be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

OPEN FORUM

The Committee noted that no open forum questions had been submitted by members of the public.

TOWN TWINNING AND 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLYDEBANK BLITZ

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration providing an update on Town Twinning and the 80th Anniversary of the Clydebank Blitz.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Democratic and Registration Services in further explanation of the report and Bailie Agnew, Chair, in answer to Members' questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note that the planned trip to meet of the Mayor of Letterkenny to discuss the friendship agreement in February 2022 has been postponed and, if feasible, should now be held in March/April;
- (2) to approve the recommendations of the Clydebank Blitz Working Group as detailed in paragraph 4.5 as follows:
 - (a) that a plaque to commemorate the bombing of Dumbarton during World War II should be laid in a suitable location within the grounds of the Municipal Buildings;
 - (b) that the Council should not proceed with the proposed church service in Our Holy Redeemers Church on Sunday, 13 March 2022, in view of the news that Kilbowie/St. Andrew's Church, Clydebank, intended to hold a service, very similar to what the Council had been planning, at 2.00 p.m. on that date and had invited Bailie Agnew to speak and would also play the commemorative music 'Clydebank 41' performed by the RSNO from the CD; and
 - (c) that a presentation of the commemorative medals should not be held, but instead the medals should be sent, by courier or hand;
- (3) to approve the additional costs involved in the purchase of Tom McKendrick's book on the Clydebank Blitz;
- (4) to note that the Manager of Democratic and Registration Services would circulate a copy of the draft Programme of Cooperation between Gdynia and West Dunbartonshire, as prepared the by the Polish Consul General, to all Members of the Committee for their information; and
- (5) to note that the Committee will not proceed with the time capsule at this particular point due to timescales.

DENNY CIVIC THEATRE

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities providing an update on Cultural Capital Fund spend to date and seeking approval for the allocation of budget to additional projects that have been identified.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities and the Assets Coordinator in further explanation of the report and in answer to Members’ questions, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the updates provided within the report; and
- (2) to progress the works outlined in paragraphs 4.2 to¹ 4.6 of the report.

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART – RICHMOND STREET PROJECT

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property advising members on discussions with the Glasgow School of Art around a proposal to develop a facility at Richmond Street in Clydebank which will provide studio space / incubator facilities and seeks approval to commit funding to the project subject to the successful negotiation of a Minute of Agreement between the Council and the Art School.

After discussion and having heard the Manager of Legal Services in further explanation of the report, the Committee agreed:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report;
- (2) to approve in principle the disposal of the facility at Richmond Street by lease to the Art School subject to the final proposal meeting the requirements for disposal of land at less than market value;
- (3) to earmark £500,000 from the Cultural Capital Fund (the Heritage Capital Fund) to the creation of studios and workspaces, subject to appropriate legal and financial due diligence and a Minute of Agreement on terms acceptable to both parties being entered into; and
- (4) that relevant officers, in consultation with the Convenor of Cultural Committee, negotiate the full terms and remit of the project with a report being submitted to a future meeting of the Committee for final approval before any of the £500,000 sum is spent.

Note: Councillor Walker left the meeting following consideration of this item.

URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS – ACQUISITION OF ARTWORK BY ALISON WATT

It was noted that a report had been submitted to the meeting of the Cultural Committee on 17 January 2022 which provided an update on acquisitions previously approved for purchase via the West Dunbartonshire Council Scottish Art Acquisition Fund (established May 2021), future plans on this fund and recommending a series of acquisitions for approval by Committee.

¹ As corrected at Meeting of the West Dunbartonshire Cultural Committee on 28 March 2022

The Chief Officer – Citizens, Culture and Facilities Committee continued the report from January to enable further proposals to be brought forward for purchase from the previously established £100,000 acquisition fund with a particular emphasis on works by Scottish women artists. She advised the Committee that there was currently £47,760 remaining in the acquisition fund and the Alison Watt work ‘Evelick’ was put forward for consideration. She advised of the purchase price of £24,000, less 10% museum discount, £21,600 and also intimated the intention to apply for funding from the National Fund for Acquisitions with the maximum funding available being £9,225.

Following this update and recommendations provided, Bailie Agnew, Chair, seconded by Councillor McColl moved:-

That the Committee agrees to purchase the recommended artwork by Alison Watt – ‘Evelick 2019, oil on canvas’ for a sum of up to £24,000 excl. VAT.

Committee notes that in doing so, we are spending money from a Capital Fund specifically for investing in relevant artwork. Committee notes that as this fund is a Capital Fund and not a Revenue Fund, it therefore cannot be used to fund general services revenue costs, as such this purchase has no impact on the 2022/23 revenue budget and savings options.

Councillor Millar, having failed to find a seconder for a proposed amendment, requested that his dissent in respect of this item. The motion was declared carried.

The meeting closed at 11.25 a.m.