

7.4 Representatives on Other Bodies

Councillor report

Meeting with MoreArts Trustees 23 August 2023

Background

MoreArts '[more arts.](#)' - [promoting More Arts for Wokingham](#) is the working name of The Cultural Partnership, a registered charity whose object is to build community through creativity. Its 6 trustees work with volunteers on projects in Wokingham including the Children's Book Festival; Wokingham Town Christmas singalong 2023; Wokingham living advent calendar (pre-covid); local art loans; pop up galleries and hands-on arts at local fetes and carnivals. Their legacy arts fund aims to support vulnerable young people. A summary fact sheet is available.

The charity was once funded by WBC but has been self-supporting for the last 15 years. It survived shut down during the Covid-19 pandemic but now has a declining cash flow. Schools don't have the time to work with them on art projects. Businesses are no longer 'hiring' artworks; some art loans are provided for care homes.

More arts is represented on WBC's Arts Business and Culture (ABC) group which purports to promote arts and culture across all parishes and towns in the Borough. How this connects with the Borough's published strategy for arts and culture 2020-30 isn't clear.

I advised More arts that ETC had an annual grant fund for projects and organisations that benefited Earley residents and told them about the potential of the Elizabeth room for voluntary organisations and pop-up events.

They are a committed group facing a challenging future. Quite what my involvement with them is has yet to be defined!

Cllr Sheena Matthews

Earley Town Council