

Buxton Area Forum

Questions and Answers

Thursday 30th November 2006

Pre-Forum question

Reference: 01BUX 30/11/06

Question: In May last year David Lomax, Leader of the Council said that the Local Authority should not support the arts and that those who enjoy the arts should pay for them. Is this still the policy of High Peak Borough Council?

Answer Cllr Lomax supports the Arts. However, arts groups should not be dependant on Borough Council funding.

Reference: 02BUX 30/11/06

Question: Burbage Band & High Peak Brass use facilities at the Octagon for concerts, competitions etc. If EMDA have their way what facilities do the Council propose as a viable alternative?

**Answer from
HPBC**

Currently there are Brass Band Events at Christmas, May (large competition) and September (local competition).

The Council is proposing to have a large marquee on site in May, to accomodate the large Antiques Fair. The use of the marquee, which will be the equivalent size of the Octagon, could be made available for the large event.

The Christmas Carol Concert could remain in the Octagon, and this would be under investigation if the feasibility study is approved by Members.

Alternative spaces to support Brass Band events could be the proposed refurbished Paxton Suite, the Bandstand or the Opera House, as well as further use of marquees.

The acoustics in the Octagon are not the best, and the alternatives would be better suited to musical events.

It is worth stressing that even if Members approve the feasibility study, the Food Hall may not go ahead as the cost of re-furbishing the space may be too expensive

Reference: 03BUX 30/11/06

Question: Would it be possible to incorporate some 'Arts' into providing an Exhibition around October of each year to co-incide with World Mental Health Day ? This would help with creating a Festival of Mental Health - to carry on the work over the last three years of the A.I.M. Group in celebrating World Mental Health Day.

**Answer from
Buxton Tourist
Information**

We give space to Poole's Cavern/Opera House each Oct/November for an exhibition which they put together with children over the half term, maybe something could be incorporated into that? Suggested contacts would be Poole's Cavern or marketing at Opera House.

**Answer from
Arts Officer**

There are two ways of involving the 'arts' in the Festival. If the organisation has any funds then they could pay an artist or group to perform and there are lots of artists working in the field of health. If funds aren't available then the organisation needs to find a voluntary arts group and hope they're interested in getting involved. In both cases I suggest the organisation starts looking at www.artsderbyshire.org The site is new but already has a large searchable list of Derbyshire based artists and performers. The organisation ought to go onto the site and register the festival too.

Questions received on the night

Reference: 04BUX 30/11/06

Question: How does James (Arts Council England representative) view the fact that people within the EM view themselves in the North West?

**Answer from
James Burkmar**

It was a decision made and we are in that region, we should try to use the money etc we get for that area. Money is distributed between areas and the money can be bid for in the particular area. It doesn't really make a difference which area we come under.

Reference: 05BUX 30/11/06

Question: With reference to sports competing with the Arts, how will the Arts compete with the Olympics coming up?

**Answer from
James Burkmar**

The Olympics is a cultural event and is being regarded as such. An officer in the regional office has been dedicated to the games. Case is being made to get the Arts embedded in the event and a legacy from the games is being sought.

Reference: 06BUX 30/11/06

Question: Can any speakers comment on the use of the Octagon in the future?

**Answer from
Cllr Wells:**

Festival used the Octagon in the past but the acoustics of the venue are difficult, prefer not to use the Paxton Suite. Both venues require huge investment, good that the Council is looking to attract funding to upgrade the venue's. Both Pav Gardens venues are not used at moment by Festival.

Unknown: Not a venue that lends itself to a project for the Opera House productions/ideas.

Reference: 07BUX 30/11/06

Question: Question directed to the Arts Officer, could they use the Octagon for events?

Answer from Richard

Johnson,

Arts Officer

Issues with acoustics but make a great venue for visual arts, exhibitions. There is a need for a space like this.

Reference: 08BUX 30/11/06

Question: What is the Councils policy with regard to film and development of venues in the Peak District?

Answer from Andy

Brown, Cultural Services

Manager, High Peak

Borough Council

Not aware of any funds that are available. Andy Brown has been working with the County to develop film. Working with young people keeping video diaries and the young people have stated an interest in film. Young and old can engage in film and the Borough is looking at getting involved in film. Reasonably high on the agenda.

Reference: 09BUX 30/11/06

Question: Why are acoustics such a problem when big bands have played in the Octagon and Paxton suite in the past. Is it what has been done in the meantime to the buildings that is the problem and can this be changed?

Answer from Cllr Alan

Wells

Volume levels and equipment has changed since then, not aware of problems in the Paxton Suite. Octagon does have acoustic problems. Difficult to hear plays in the Octagon

Reference: 10BUX 30/11/06

Question: Buxton Festival Fringe is the largest Arts Festival in the area. 470 events held, Borough Council funding was cut leaving the organisation in poor financial situation, how do the speakers tonight relate to funding in the area?

Answer from Cllr John

Pritchard

Current position is that the Executive will have another look at the funding.

Reference: 11BUX 30/11/06

Question: Vision Buxton. Request for help on a project along the lines of the magic carpet and to create a community space and funding for a study. Does anyone know of anybody who has been involved in the magic carpet, project paperwork is held and want to talk to people about the concept.

Answer from Cllr

Alan Wells

Alan Wells could provide some information and to see if help is available.

Reference: 12BUX 30/11/06

Question:

G&S is a 3 week festival that is under threat from the feasibility study, what is going to happen to the Arts that take place in the Octagon if the Food Hall idea goes ahead? How does Alan Wells feel about the fact that we may lose the G&S Festival?

Answer from Cllr

Alan Wells:

The G&S Festival have threatened to leave the town before. The Council invest money to keep the festival. At this stage only a feasibility study has been undertaken on the Food Hall proposal. Octagon has a performance space that can be used.

Answer from

Andrew Aughton, Chief

Executive, Buxton

Opera House:

Would not like the G&S Festival to leave Buxton, is in dialogue with the Festival to see what can be done to keep the Festival.