

COUNCIL: 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

CULTURE & LEISURE STATEMENT

Covid-19 Impact on Culture & Leisure

It gives me great pleasure, after 18 long months, to update Members on the re-opening of many of our cultural venues and some of our exciting plans for the future. Covid-19 had a devastating impact on my portfolio, but I have been greatly encouraged to see people enthusiastically return to our venues to enjoy activities that have been so clearly missed. I would stress that we must remain vigilant. Covid is still with us and is likely to have a major impact on service delivery for some months to come. It is critical that we continue to consider the safety of our patrons, promoters, clients and staff as we rebuild the sector. The public's ongoing support in complying with the few remaining safety asks made of them when attending these venues and activities will be pivotal to them remaining open. It is disappointing to hear reports of staff being abused when, for example, patrons are requested to wear face coverings in crowded/public areas. We have fought long and hard to re-open our sector and it will be a travesty if that progress is undermined and we have to close our doors again.

Museum of Cardiff

It has been a busy summer for the team at the Museum of Cardiff as they prepared to welcome visitors back to the museum, as well as delivering activities online and outside. The Museum re-opened its doors on 1 September 2021 after almost 18 months of closure. Visitors can enjoy extra fun activities, including free *Cardiff Characters* gallery trails and *My Museum* family learning packs. QR codes have also been added to the displays enabling visitors to download information about the objects using their smartphones.

The Museum has continued to run online reminiscence sessions in partnership with Independent Living Services, including participating in the 50+ virtual summer festival. Particular highlights include collaborating with the Hubs & Libraries team to run a session about memories of the Old Library and with the Sherman Theatre's 'Love Letters to Cardiff' project to run a session reminiscing about people's love for the city. Officers have also delivered a Dementia Friends information session for staff at Aelwyd Housing Association.

The Museum's Learning and Outreach Officer also developed and delivered new *There's a Museum in my Kitchen* virtual sessions as part of the *Food and Fun* summer programme. Workshops were facilitated in seven schools, enabling approximately 230 pupils to take part. In addition, the Museum teamed up with ACE (Action in Caerau & Ely) and the CAER Heritage Project to run an activity at the Summer of Smiles 'Time Travelling' fun day at Trelai Park.

St David's Hall

St David's Hall opened its doors to a sold-out performance of Jimmy Carr on 31 August 2021. A few days later, the Hall hosted four full-house performances of *Riverdance* with standing ovations every night. With the new season launched and rescheduled shows now going ahead, booking at the box office has been brisk with a full calendar of events right up to Christmas and beyond. The newly improved ventilation system in the Hall ensures that audiences can enjoy performances in the knowledge that the air in the auditorium and foyers changes six times an hour. The newly-branded Cardiff Classical Season recently launched with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales will also commence its 17-concert series on 30 September 2021.

New Theatre

After the Covid-enforced delay, I am pleased to report that the property lease for the New Theatre has been concluded. The Theatre is now run and managed by HQ Theatres & Hospitality and they presented their first public performance on 19 September 2021. I am sure that Members will be happy to join me in wishing both HQ Theatres and their new staff team every success for the future. We look forward to working with them as a welcome addition to the wider cultural Cardiff family.

City Hall

City Hall hosted its first dinner for 400 guests on 3 September 2021 and will have hosted a further six dinners by the end of this month. In addition, the venue will host a wedding fair and a national RAF Wales and Battle of Britain exhibition, including a Red Arrows fly past. City Hall has continued to support the neighbouring Law Courts over past months, providing a safe and secure waiting area for jurors due to attend Crown Court. We were also proud to be able to continue to support the Welsh Blood Service donation sessions throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. Encouragingly, the volume of conference & events enquiries has continued to rise in recent weeks and the Conference & Events Team, with the support of our Health & Safety Team, is working hard to meet demand, whilst also supporting clients in ensuring that their events are managed safely.

Events

The Events Team has had little respite during the last 18 months and this summer has been no different. Following 18 months of helping to deliver and support other council services during the pandemic; developing and running the Castle Street Café, and providing city centre marshalling support, including the 2020 Christmas 'Elf & Safety' team, the Events Team's focus has turned to supporting the music sector.

Cardiff Castle was the host venue for a series of music events. These included Live Under the Stars; three music concerts featuring Kaiser Chiefs, The Foals and Shangri La and, last but not least, Live and Unlocked; where Cardiff Castle provided the August Bank Holiday venue for our grassroots music venues to take to the stage and showcase the important role they play in the city. I would like to thank Fuel, Pulse, Porter's and the Moon Club for their support.

More recently on 16-19 September 2021, the Council hosted the largest series of events on its land since before the initial lockdown in March 2020. The event organisers, Titan, attracted some of the world's biggest music artists to perform in Cardiff Bay, which over a four-day period saw more than 33,000 people in attendance. The Titan 'Bay Series' was the first of its kind to take place at the Alexandra Head site and proved to be a safe and highly successful music festival. Public feedback has been very positive, with the event organisers looking to repeat the event in 2022.

I would like to take the opportunity to put on record my sincere appreciation to all our multi-agency partners who have worked with us throughout the summer to ensure that we were able to deliver a Summer of Smiles; most especially, the Chair and members of the city's Events Liaison Panel. Everyone, without exception, has worked tirelessly with us to ensure that we were able to host and support these activities and events, with public safety remaining paramount in all our endeavours.

Whilst the summer delivery programme has certainly kept us busy, planning for Christmas has also been at the forefront of our thinking and we are now in the process of finalising the final Christmas programme, full details of which I aim to share next month. Highlights will include the annual Christmas Market, Santa's Grotto and Carousel, the winter food offer on Working Street and two new exciting initiatives.

Firstly, Winter Wonderland will be split over two sites this year. The Ice Rink and Ice Walk will be hosted in Cardiff Castle, whilst the Alpine Village, funfair and a new ticketed Ice Bar will be located on City Hall Lawn. This will provide greater space on both sites for people to enjoy the attraction and will give us greater flexibility in respect of any required Covid mitigations.

Secondly, Bute Park will also welcome a new Christmas light trail. From 25 November 2021, the Park will host an enchanting fairy tree avenue, mesmerising lily pond, flickering fire sculptures, spectacular mirror ball displays, and huge illuminated trees all culminating in a sea of light installation.

Public Space Protection Order for Dog Controls

On 4 October 2021, a new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), designed to help improve public and green spaces, will come into force across the city. The PSPO, under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, will allow the Council to undertake enforcement action against dog owners who allow their pets to foul in an area of public land without cleaning up after them. The Order, developed following public consultation, also requires:

1. any person in charge of a dog to carry dog waste bags and produce them if requested by a Council or Police Officer;
2. that dogs are kept on a lead whilst in a cemetery;
3. that dogs are kept under proper control in public areas; and
4. excludes dogs from certain public spaces including children's play areas and games areas.

If breached, an authorised officer could issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100, which could rise to £1,000 if left unpaid.

The dog controls will be exempt for persons, who have a disability that affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects, in respect of a dog trained by a registered charity and upon which the person relies for assistance.

The dog control signage across the city will also support the Child Friendly Cardiff and Outdoor Cardiff campaigns to improve the city environment for children and promote the use of outdoor spaces across Cardiff for everyone.

The PSPO can be modified and will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure that any controls remain appropriate. Further details of the PSPO can be found on the Council's website: <https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/resident/Leisure-parks-and-culture/Public-Spaces-Protection-Orders/Pages/default.aspx>

Parks

Members will be aware of the deplorable acts of vandalism, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour that occurred earlier in the month in Bute Park, Insole Court, Caerleon Park and Coleford Drive Open Space. I am appalled by them and the impact that they have had on local communities, the staff who work hard to maintain the areas and the Council as a corporate body. I am fully committed to working with South Wales Police and other stakeholders to address the current issues and to ensure that residents and visitors to our city can feel safe and continue to enjoy our parks and public open space provision.

Coed Caerdydd

At previous Council meetings, I have updated Members on the status of our Coed Caerdydd project, which aims to increase tree canopy across the city over time. You may also recall that, last month, I invited all Members to participate in an initial consultation exercise aimed at understanding local perspectives and I would encourage those who have not completed the consultation questionnaire to do so. I can also confirm that from November 2021, the Coed Caerdydd Project Manager will be commencing a face-to-face virtual programme of consultation meetings to update on the progress of the project.

Councillor Peter Bradbury
Cabinet Member for Culture & Leisure
23 September 2021