**Stafford and District Arts Council**

AGM

October 10th 2018

CHAIR’S REPORT 2017/8

SDAC is an independent body which consists of an executive committee of elected volunteers whose purpose is to support the Arts within Stafford Borough, in particular by awarding grants to local groups and individuals. The grants are funded by Stafford Borough Council, who, for the last four years, have given £10,000 to SDAC to allocate. SDAC has a Service Level Agreement with Stafford Borough Council to ensure that the money is used according to our constitution and that a proper system of grant applications is followed.

One of our interests is that the funding should go to events and activities which affect the widest possible audience. We are always interested in funding events which involve new people and new audiences.

We are required to report back to SBC and it is an absolutely essential part of our work that all the groups who are awarded grants report back to us so that we can know the effect of the activities and what audiences are benefiting.

We have no guarantee as yet of any funding from SBC beyond this financial year (2018/19) so we will no doubt be in a position in which we have to justify any funding by explaining the benefits gained to the people of Stafford.

In June 2017 we had a very big and complicated task in the disposal of the large collection of costumes which SDAC had owned for many years. These were stored in the Chetwynd Centre and had to be moved or sold when the building was cleared for sale. Over the last few years Nia Wearn and her team had worked very hard, and enthusiastically, to sort out, catalogue and promote the collection. They had had some success but the executive decided that the collection would never be economically viable and it would not be justified to spend money on storage. To our relief a sale was arranged which brought in £1350 which could be used for grants, and the remainder of the collection was taken by Oxfam, leaving us with no inconvenient burden.

To show very clearly what we have done in the year 2017/8 I am including my brief quarterly reports which I am required to make to SBC.

You will see from the report of the second quarter that we had some changes to the executive, and I thanked our departing members for their work at the last AGM.

SDAC is an important factor in the cultural life of Stafford and I thank the current executive for their work, Rod Grealish, treasurer and Stewart Bishop, Secretary, Nia Wearn who has looked after our website and facebook presence, Jonathan Watkiss and Ralph Cooke who were elected as members if the executive at the last AGM, and more recently Sue Brereton-Banks, Isabella Davies and Peter Jones who have joined as co-opted members.

ANDREW BAKER

10/10/2018

FIRST QUARTER

SDAC awarded five grants during this quarter totalling £3,895. These were to support a wide variety of activities aimed at a wide audience. It is particularly good that they include projects that are focussed on new audiences. The Windmill Broadcasting project was for a children’s art project based on Stafford Windmill. Sustainability Matters was for the “There is No Planet B” environmental art exhibition at St Chad’s Church, which has art work by schools and attracts a large audience in the High Street. The Stafford Music Festival features music of all kinds with a very varied audience. Stafford Players is one of our more traditional member groups which continues to have large audiences for high quality productions. The Adbaston Concert Society is a remarkable success story, putting on very high quality concerts on the Eastern edge of Stafford Borough.

By the end of April we had only a little over £1000 in reserve in readiness for the receipt of the new year’s £10,000 grant from SBC.

Windmill Broadcasting £1000

Stafford Music Festival £2,000

Stafford Players £250

Sustainability Matters £500

Adbaston Community Concert Society £14

SECOND QUARTER

SDAC held its AGM on Tuesday 26th September. This is open to representatives of member organisations and includes the formal election of officers and other members of the executive. Three members of the executive did not apply for re-election, Helga Hopkinson, Isabella Davies and Maureen Compton. One new member was elected, Jonathan Watkiss. Our long serving secretary, Ray Braziel, has retired from SDAC and he was thanked for the enormous amount of work he had put into SDAC. The new secretary is Stewart Bishop. Andrew Baker remains Chair.

The Executive has vacancies and we will be looking at the possibility of co-opting members who can make a useful contribution and attend the meetings to ensure that meetings are quorate.

SDAC has been developing its online and social media presence, particularly to make a wider range of organisations and individuals aware of the possibility of applying for grants. In the past SDAC was dominated by traditional arts organisations, choirs, drama societies etc, but Stafford’s very lively and creative arts community has changed, with new kinds of organisations and supporters.

Though there are traditional organisations which continue to have very good audiences it is exciting to be able to support new projects which affect different audiences, such as an art project with a women and children’s refuge and an exhibition of Stafford poetry with the Staffordshire Poet Laureate.

THIRD QUARTER

SDAC had only two meetings in this quarter as a December meeting would not have been quorate. Grants of a total of £2000 were awarded.

£500 was given to Stagedright for a young people’s musical production “Just So.”

£1000 was given to an art project for Stafford Women’s Refuge, which was seen as both innovative and also supporting the arts for a new audience.

£500 was given to Stafford Arts Group.

We have also been using social media to widen knowledge of SDAC’s grants. This seems to be successful as we are attracting bids from different kinds of organisations which are to the benefit of new parts of the community.

FOURTH QUARTER

Stafford District Art Council report January-March 2018

These are the grants awarded in January-March 2018.

January 10th Meeting:

Adbaston Community Concert Society - £340 grant agreed

Classic Rhythm - Flute, keyboards and percussion Sunday 4th March 2018

This concert was unfortunately cancelled and so the grant was held over for a later concert.

Stafford Folk Players - £450 grant agreed

Stafford Players – £700 grant agreed

For production of Hay Fever, February 13-17th 2018

Konnecktiv Arts - £995 grant agreed

February 7th

Stafford Choral Society – Grant of £1000

Musical Theatre Stafford – Grant of £700

Musical Youth Theatre Stafford – Grant of £300

March 14th

Adbaston Community Concert Society – Agreed Grant of £480.

Remainder of a previous grant issued, of £340, would be deducted from this application so only £140 to be paid.

Stafford Players – Agreed Grant of £600

Several of the grants were given with the proviso that the organisations concerned return evaluation forms for their previous events, which they did. These forms are very important as a record of the success of the events and the number of people who benefited from them.

At the end of April SDAC had a balance of £3010.49 to award as grants between the end of the financial year and the time when SDAC receives its next grant

from Stafford Borough Council. This is certain to be allocated in the next two months or so.