

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

**CULTURE, TOURISM AND ENTERPRISE AD HOC PANEL - CULTURAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN**

**4.00pm 30 JUNE 2010**

**THE STUDIO BAR, KOMEDIA**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillor Melanie Davis and Councillor Rachel Fryer

**Also in attendance:**

Marina Kobler, Programmer and Founder, the Komedia  
Emma Taylor, Founder, The Circus Project  
Simon Wilkinson, Director, JunkTV  
Daniel Bernstein, Arts Council England  
Jamie Wyld, Videoclub/Lighthouse  
Jackie Fawcett, Director of Music and Performing Arts, Blatchington Mill School  
Chris Taylor, Director, New Writing South  
Anna Jefferson, Creative Learning Manager, New Writing South  
Honor Wilson-Fletcher, Aldridge Foundation  
Robyn Steer, Community Media & Visual Arts Co-ordinator, Patcham High School  
Liz Hall, Executive Director, Carousel  
John Varah, Same Sky  
Donna Close, Arts & Cultural Projects Manager, B&HCC  
Julia Riches, Scrutiny Officer, B&HCC

**PART ONE**

**1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

Councillor Davis declared an interest as a member of the Arts Commission and on the Board of Brighton Carnival.

**2. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chair, Cllr Davis, welcomed everyone to the meeting. This was the fourth and final meeting of the Panel to consider the cultural provision for children and young people in the city. The Panel had heard about the fantastic events going on in the city and the aim of this meeting was to address three particular areas that had come to the Panel's attention, namely, communication, venues and the one thing the city could do better.

The meeting was to be a round table discussion, rather than a formal meeting and all contributions were very welcome.

**3. MINUTES FROM 19 MAY 2010**

Minutes agreed.

**4. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

**Present:**

Marina Kobler, Programmer and Founder, the Komedia  
Emma Taylor, Founder, The Circus Project  
Simon Wilkinson, Director, JunkTV  
Daniel Bernstein, Arts Council England  
Jamie Wyld, Videoclub/Lighthouse  
Jackie Fawcett, Director of Music and Performing Arts, Blatchington Mill School  
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**Discussion**

**1. Communication: how can this be improved across the city? (including delivering and updating the Express Strategy)**

The following points were made during the discussion:

There was a need for a centralised source that, for example, showed where the nearest drama club was and at what time. A resource for parents and children. There were central resources but not targeted resources and it would be useful to direct people to say here is a city resource, rather than giving ad-hoc advice based on the contacts different people have. It could start connecting people and practitioners.

A simple website with a description of events or organisations with links to their websites would be relatively easy to maintain and wouldn't need frequent updating.

The point was made that a new Arts Development Officer had just been appointed by the Council and part of their job was to collate information, and to take forward the Express strategy.

There was a demand for collaborative projects and at the moment this operated on the basis of who you know - which was not the best way of operating.

The question was asked – what would the website be for? Parents, children and collaborative working were suggested.

The example was given of the Circus Project who had recently put together a directory of people in the circus in Sussex. A questionnaire was sent out and it created a simple list of who

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does what. But issues had arisen over how complete it was, over who looks after it, and over quality. It was difficult to regulate the quality of those on the list and disclaimers were needed.

Young people needed to be asked what they would find useful. Blatchington Mill School were going to appoint an arts leader for each year group to feedback on arts projects. These individuals could also help to inform the future websites and strategies.

The Express Strategy had recommended a Youth Arts Council but this had not happened when the funding was not forthcoming.

Lighthouse had an online project created by young people in Falmer School. It was a young-led project to develop a programme for their peers using online and events based projects. The 'Viewfinder' project created a gallery space funded by 'Enquire'. It was about getting young people's views and could be a useful model to roll out into other arts arenas.

The question was asked about whether the idea was to meet demand or create demand? The answer was both. This was a difficult set of demands to reconcile and perhaps promotion on a regular basis may be more useful and targeted. The example was given of a project for the year of reading where a central list of organisations was created (100,000s of organisations). The difficulty was in making the connection between the online facility and those who didn't know it was there. The hard to reach were a long way from a website and a whole process was required, in addition to a website.

National strategies were very different to local strategies and the point was made that locally, Falmer and Mouslecoomb were very well engaged in the arts. SameSky had started in Falmer 21 years ago. New Writing South had also carried out a fantastic project in Falmer.

It was suggested that the website must be targeted to be relevant. Who were the target groups?

JunkTv noted that they were contacted by schools who had heard of them and there was a close informal network for targeted work. One problem was sustainability. Children may take part in a ten week course and then there was nowhere to go; no money to take the project forward.

There were now special co-ordinators in all secondary schools who were Community Action Workers. Their role was to get more students involved in their community and in the school itself. It was a one year project and was linked to the volunteering programme.

It was suggested that a good recommendation for the Panel's report would be that there was a nominated person in each school to promote and co-ordinate cultural events.

It was noted that Carousel worked with young people up to age 25 rather than 19 and it would be useful to build this in to any recommendations.

Blatchington Mill School were doing a participation audit to work out which students don't currently do any arts/cultural clubs/projects and to find out what they would like to do. This was an ongoing audit.

It was suggested that it could be a recommendation that all schools undertake such an audit. The point was made that it was not just about schools, but about extended school networks, youth groups, universities etc. The universities have widening participation officers under the (now defunct) 'Creative Campus Initiative'. This had funded projects across the South East and had university students working with schools.

Fabrica were leading a 'Brighton & Hove Visual Arts Consortium' and that work would be interesting for the Panel.

## **2. Venues: what can be done to make appropriate venues more accessible to young people?**

The example was given of the project 'Our Space' with New Writing South and Falmer, where a playwright worked with the students and it culminated in a performance in the Pavilion which was fantastic. The students had been incredibly impressed to be performing there. The key to that had been early contact with the Pavilion to form a partnership. This early contact had led to a partnership that also worked for the Pavilion (and met some of their requirements to work with young people).

The issue of licensing was raised. The Komedia hold underage gigs but they still had to provide a certain number of staff, all of whom had to be CRB checked so this makes it expensive. Even if only staff costs were charged, it can still seem expensive for small groups.

The point was made that it is not just about venues but also about performance space to work in. If there was a mismatch in culture between the art space and the young people, then the art space won't work with young people again. For Carousel, there was the problem of finding accessible space. The Film Festival was in jeopardy now because of the loss of the venue. Wheelchair accessibility was a real problem.

The Aldridge Foundation were looking at how they could work with schools to create a better space. Talking about how to make public space better and to try and use the whole school in projects. For the Falmer Academy, the Section 106 (per cent for art) was being used to hire a curator to create partnerships and to work creatively.

The idea of schools as venues more widely was raised. If the children involved in projects had not had a good time at school, then that caused issues around using schools. The feedback from using venues such as the Pavilion was that it was fantastic to perform there, both for the students and the parents. There was also the issue that if you were creating a performance in a school, it was done 'the school way' rather than the way it would normally evolve. If there was a very motivated teacher involved, however, that could make a difference. It was very much a school-by-school case, although excluded children would not want to be involved in projects in schools.

When working with the Youth Offending Team it was very hard to get venues: there was a real fear there by the venues. But these young people felt further excluded if there was no appropriate venue.

The point was made that for the Youth Circus, the novelty of performing in such venues can wear off and sometimes there was creativity in transforming space.

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The example was given of Coachworks which was an existing space currently under threat. It was the only place in Brighton where the space can be used in as rough a way as necessary (throwing paint etc).

The need for a building for culture and young people was discussed. A space young people could build a relationship with. Both Chichester and Hastings had young persons zones. The Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) on Edward Street was suggested as a possible pilot for a central space. A new CEO had just been appointed and would be taking the BYC forward. The Centre already contained a dance studio and a skateboard park. The network of space there was not well used. It could form a physical hub for young people if it was used more. The point was made that this needs to be led by young people who must have a say in what they wanted.

**Other issues:**

The central forum was a good idea and schools websites could link in. The role of the community action worker could fit in here too.

On the children's parade, there could be more linking between schools. The children's parade involved 80 schools and cost around £29,000. The schools themselves determine what children are involved. This year there was 4 geographical groups and it was run with schools across the area.

The issue of CRB checks was raised and the lack of uniformity across the city. It was suggested that the panel could recommend that the CRB procedures were considered and where possible, rationalised across the city.

The meeting concluded at 6.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of