

AGENDA ITEM 14 (B)

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

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

11.00am 28 APRIL 2010

THE LECTURE ROOM, FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, BRIGHTON

MINUTES

Present: Councillor

Also in attendance: Councillor Davis, Fryer and C Theobald

Other Members present:

PART ONE

6. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

A. Declaration of Substitutes

No Substitutes are permitted.

B. Declaration of interest

There were none.

C. Declaration of party whip

There was none.

7. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair, Councillor Melanie Davis welcomed everyone to the meeting. This was the second Panel meeting. They had a very useful and informative session on 31 March when they heard from: James Dougan, Julia Box and Emma Fincham from the Children and Young People Trust (CYPT); Lucy Stone from Rhythmix, and Peter Chivers, Head of Brighton and Hove Music and Study Support (BHMAS). The Panel were aware that there was a lot of fantastic work going on in the city in terms of cultural activity for children and young people and whilst they were keen to highlight this, they were also keen to look at what could be done better, and where the gaps were. They were also keen to explore the 'Express' Strategy and how to take this forward. The Chair explained that each person would be asked in turn to outline their area for 5-10 minutes and then take questions.

8. WITNESSES

**Councillor Vanessa Brown, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and
Councillor David Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Brighton
& Hove City Council (B&HCC).**

Cllr Brown gave an overview of what was happening in the schools across the city. It was not possible to give a report on what was happening in each school without contacting them directly. All schools had bands and music lessons. For example, in Balfour School there was an orchestra and a salsa band. There was the opportunity to learn lots of instruments. BHMAS was outstanding and there were lots of concerts in schools (recent concerts included Oliver and Bugsy Malone in primary schools and Grease and Chekhov in secondary schools). Blatchington Mill was a performance college. Dorothy Stringer School was the sports leader. Falmer School had a team from Strictly Come Dancing visit, and there were often travelling performances that covered a range of issues, for example a theatre production had focused on drink driving. Artists visited schools on special projects and the Sealife Centre had sponsored an arts competition.

BHMAS had recently undergone a second Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCFS) moderation and was judged outstanding. Soundmakers was judged as high quality and the effective partnerships were praised. The provision for looked after children was also judged outstanding, as was the song writing project for young carers. 100% of KS2 participated in Soundmakers, around 2,700 children.

Other examples of activities in the city included Night Crew, an opera at Glynbourne with young people in the chorus. Sounds from the City was a festival in March when 200 young bands and soloists were given the chance to perform. The Brighton Youth Orchestra had performed at the Albert Hall in London.

The 'Express' Strategy had introduced the Arts Mark and 50% of schools had been awarded it – this was higher than the national average. The Children's Festival was also part of the 'Express' Strategy and was funded by the Council and the Arts Commission. It was in its fourth year now. The Youth Arts Festival was aimed at 11-19yr olds and was to take place from April 17 to May 3 this year.

The Brighton Dome and Festival worked with young people and had recently appointed an extra person to the education team. Schools were often invited to open rehearsals. The Children and Arts Foundation supported free tickets for 700 children and young people last year.

Councillor Smith tabled a paper giving detailed answers to key questions. He went on to give an overview of what was happening in the city. The city does very well nationally and there were many events. The one negative aspect was that it could be difficult to find out what was going on. Communication could be better and the information on what was happening, and when, could be improved. Events in the city included baby boogie, homework clubs, events at museums, Alice in Wonderland and hip hop dancing for boys at Lighthouse. The main venues were working well but the other venues did struggle to get family audiences.

Other examples included a 6 year project funded by the Victoria and Albert as part of a national strategy. This project worked with secondary schools and with Action for Children. For the last two years this project had been called Design for Life and culminated in a fashion show in

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partnership with the universities. There was also a range of children's activities as part of Black History month, a project called Off by Hear, working with the BBC and local schools promoting a national poetry competition, and the Children's Parade.

There was a sports strategy looking forward to 2012. The Take Part campaign was an example of sports and art combining. There was also the Big Dance 2012. There was room for improvement but they were looking forward.

In response to a question, Cllr Smith commented that they worked a lot in partnership. They worked with both Sussex Cricket Club and Brighton & Hove Albion. It was important to appeal to what children wish to do and then develop that. For example the exhibition of hip hop dancing in Churchill Square was very successful.

Cllr Brown noted that the Council had got much better at connecting with hard to reach children and young people. The Dome worked well at reaching out into the more deprived areas, including offering free tickets. Overall, they were reaching a lot of children, and not missing many.

Following a question on funding, Cllr Smith told the Panel that a 2 seas Interreg bid would be submitted this year which was a collaboration between Brighton & Hove, Rotterdam, Amien, and Ghent. A Children's Festival bid for funding for an international festival was also well advanced. The Brighton & Hove Children's Festival was part of a national network (led by Brighton & Hove) and part of this was looking at what was happening and where the gaps were. The issue of resources was a key one: targeted events were very resource-intensive. Funding bids can take 18 months to come to fruition and Brighton had lost some events due to a lack of funding.

Ms Karen McCallum, Head Teacher, Patcham Junior School

Ms McCallum told the Panel that within the local authority and the Dome, there had been a large increase in the number of events available. Ms McCallum had been in Brighton since 1981 and seen this continually increase. The Brighton Festival was fantastic. All schools take part and it was brilliantly organised. The 'Lets Dance' programme was across the whole authority and had grown over the years. There were a wide spectrum of community events and they tried to include as many children as possible. The liaison with schools and the community had been fantastic. The Dome had a creative steering group that created a network from the Dome to focus on schools in areas of deprivation. In sport, Brighton & Hove Albion were very successful in working with underachieving boys to motivate them. Soundmakers had been in Patcham Junior School for four years and was fantastic. The Sing Up training offered had been excellent.

Ms McCallum mentioned one small example of a lack of communication but emphasised that this was a very minor incident. She had only become aware of a relevant event at the Jubilee Library due to her role on the BHMAS Trust Board.

Following a question on take-up and if this differed at secondary level, Ms McCallum replied that at her school there were excellent links with the secondary school and children performed in each others school.

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Overall, there was a lot of networking across the authority, for example, schools who didn't have the Arts Award came to Patcham to learn about it. There was a festival of learning in June where all schools were open and those schools that were not as well developed in the area of cultural activities could learn from other schools. It was a city-wide initiative. Following a question about networking, Ms McCallum explained that the Heads meeting recently had discussed if there was a need for a formal network. There were smaller groups – for example 'Hand in Hand' which was a network of schools that wished to develop creativity. Overall, the networks were more about teaching and learning rather than subject specific. If a school wanted to improve its arts programme, then links would be made to facilitate this.

Jo Bates, Youth Arts Worker, Youth Offending Team, and Nigel Andain, Head of Youth Offending Team, B&HCC

Ms Bates explained that she was a Social Worker in the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and worked with children and young people aged between 10 and 18yrs old who were socially excluded. They were mostly not in school, were NEET, may be homeless and have problems with drugs and alcohol. They did not access the mainstream provision of services of any sort and often had no family support. They were excluded from all provision in the city.

Her post of Arts Project Worker had been created in order to be more targeted toward young offenders and re-offenders. They offered a wide range of projects including film, fashion, creative writing, exhibitions, music, singing lessons with Rhythmix, or BHMAS. They worked with local artists wherever possible. These projects were excellent for raising self-esteem and for providing a free space for young people to say what they want.

There was no core funding and whilst Ms Bates wrote many funding bids, they were often unsuccessful and the projects were run on a shoestring. The biggest issue was resources.

There are around 200 young people at YOT but they don't all participate in these activities. Around 50/60 children a year do, either in small groups or in one-to-one sessions. There was a music studio currently being built which would be a good resource. She often worked closely with the Youth Arts Festival and they had recently produced a multi-media exhibition together.

Projects were not sustainable under the current funding and this was not acceptable. This can have a negative effect on the young people who had achieved under the project and then there was nothing when the project ended.

Ms Bates emphasised the importance and positive benefits of the use of the arts in working with young people. Often the young people have difficult relationships with adults and using the arts was a very useful tool. The use of the arts in social work was not taken seriously enough or given enough credibility which led to not enough sustainable funding.

Following a question on what Ms Box would do first with more funding, she replied it would be to embed the arts work throughout the whole team and to create sustainable projects that could run over a year. For example, run a weekly art club or multi-media work or a radio station – something long term. Peer to peer education would also be very powerful when young people are trained to run workshops for their peers.

On the subject of what could encourage more young people to be involved in the arts projects, Ms Bates told the Panel that there were always young people who were very difficult to reach

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or who may be in a very chaotic time in their lives. The projects must focus on the child or young person. Ms Bates agreed to provide some examples of the work with young people and the benefits that could be used as a case study in the Panel's report.

On venues, Ms Bates told the Panel that they had a basement space in YOT and used the Friends' Meeting House. They also worked with Youth Clubs such as the Crew Club. Geographic location can be an issue – YOT are based centrally but there were areas of the city where residents would not go (for example those from Whitehawk may not want to go to Moulsecoomb).

Mr Andain told the Panel that this targeted work was very resource intensive. It can be difficult to justify arts work in the current economic climate, especially in terms of hard data on re-offending levels, but they do know that this work does mean a lot, particularly in terms of self-esteem. There was not an arts strategy for the service so there was a lack of continuity and no funding to mainstream it in the whole team.

Mr Andain informed the Panel about 'Artscape' where young people carrying out reparation work could do work on murals around the city (for example, one had been done in the Youth Court). There was an issue around getting the general public to understand why arts work was important. One key point is that these young people are often not included in main stream provision. They worked with around 500 children and young people and 40% of these had not been engaged with schools at all. It was suggested by the Panel that a recommendation could be that art programmes were offered to the YOS team as well as to schools. Mr Andain welcomed the idea and commented on the issue of contamination: high risk repeat offenders all together can have their sense of themselves as young offenders reinforced and more done to integrate these young people or find places on arts programmes for them would be excellent. As Ms Bates was a full time arts worker, this meant that case workers had a heavier case load but it was a very important post.

The Family Therapy Project was funded by the National Academy of Parenting Practitioners. A control group was not receiving as much therapy as the other group. This had helped fund the studio. Following a question on funding, Mr Andain explained they were entirely funded by B&HCC and the Youth Justice Board. It was difficult to raise funding which is target driven. However, the re-offending rates had dropped since Ms Bates had been a full time arts worker.

Catherine Orbach, Director, Creative Partnerships Sussex and Surrey

Ms Orbach gave an overview of the Creative Partnerships in Sussex and Surrey. They were set up in April 2008 as a national project. It started as a pilot in areas of deprivation. Partners were taken to work in schools. The arts were a great tool for engaging young people. It was not an arts programme per se but set out how people can work and think creatively. A national report by Ken Robinson recognised the need to develop creative skills to help children in the future. The report had noted that imaginative, flexible children who could problem solve were needed for the future, and an education system delivering these skills was crucial. The Creative Partnerships were set up to link the two worlds of the creative sector and schools.

Ms Orbach explained the two main projects in Brighton & Hove. The Change Programme offered schools up to 3 years funding looking at how creative a school was, what they could do differently. This was led by senior management and was between £10,000 and £20,000 with the school providing 25%.

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The Enquiry Schools Programme was a one year project lead by a teacher. This was around £4,000 with 25% from the school. Most of the funding went to bringing a professional into the school. There were creative agents who brokered relationships between schools and other creative partners. This was led by schools who determined what they wanted – they devised a question to be answered, for example, how can we make this space more creative; how can dance develop maths skills? It also gave teachers space to develop their skills. The criteria for the Change Programme in the city was ‘aim high’ and involved Longhill and Varndean Schools. The first phase of the Enquiry project had finished and the second was ongoing.

Ms Orbach gave the example of St Andrew’s Primary School that had used a film-making project and the skills and confidence that had come from that project had stayed in the school and was animating the way language was used. In Longhill, children had a voice on what a courtyard space looked like. In Blatchington Mill they had done a history of the school.

The projects can also feed into home life – if children were very enthusiastic about a project, parents were more confident in being involved. The projects were all about partnership and matching educational expertise with creative expertise. It was about creative processes rather than creative products.

Ms Orbach told the Panel they were currently looking at how to create networks and were looking at the example of Wired Sussex. In response to a question, Ms Orbach said that they sent information out to all schools. The challenge was how to position it for schools and to make the argument that engagement with the arts was worthwhile. Following a question on barriers, Ms Orbach noted that there was no real resistance but the 25% financial input from schools may have been an issue for some schools. Once schools are on board, they understood the value of the programmes.

Creative Partnerships were only funded until July 2011 and were looking at repackaging the projects. The Panel asked for further information on projects to possibly form the basis of a case study in the report. Creative Partnerships talked a lot to schools about what they could do and the creative practitioners were encouraged to attend staff meetings to ensure the whole school knew what was happening in classes involved in projects.

The suggestion was made that in Change Schools, governors could be involved in the process. Work with governors may help promote the projects since governors were budget-holders. There was a governors’ network.

The Chair thanked all the witnesses for attending the meeting and for their very helpful contributions to the Panel’s inquiry.

9. MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Draft minutes were circulated.

10. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The future meetings were 19 May at 11am in the Jubilee Library and 30 June at 4pm (round table, venue to be confirmed).

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

