

Agenda Item 15 - Appendix 2

Possible questions for the panel to address

28 April 2010 evidence session

Cabinet Members (Cllr Vanessa Brown and Cllr David Smith)

(Overview of the Council's services and partnership working)

- **What do you see as the key successes in the city in terms of cultural provision for children and young people?**
 - **Express** The Arts Strategy for Children and Young People has been put together with a wide group of stakeholders and although it is a few years old its aims and objectives are still very relevant and it stands up as a framework for consistent delivery of work for children and young people in the city.
 - **BHMAS** Brighton & Hove Music and Study Support service provides opportunities for children and young people through the city's schools to take part in music, dance and visual arts projects. BHMAS is very successful reaching 6000 young people each week. The service has been judged to be 'outstanding' by the DCSF.
 - **Children's Parade** Now 25 years old, the parade happens every year and involves every school in the city. Brighton & Hove are the only city that's runs a children's parade in this way and other parades around the world have been modelled on the Brighton & Hove event.
 - **Royal Pavilion & Museums** The museums service has been offering a learning service dating back to the 1970s. This service has grown and responded to different generations. The programme has always included on-site learning for school groups and activities on all museum sites for families. It is a first class service that has gone from strength to strength and includes workshops in arts, craft, science, history and literature for both the school curriculum and for family groups. In the more recent past galleries and temporary galleries have been developed at Brighton Museum & Art Gallery and at Hove Museum & Art Gallery that have been planned with children as the key audience. All temporary exhibitions and many museum galleries contain interactives and materials for children.
 - **Libraries and Information Services:** Libraries successfully provide reading and learning services to children and young people, which is recognised by the fact that we have the second highest satisfaction rate in the country for this age group. Our strengths are particularly in the 0-12 years age group, with dedicated and regular engagement such as Bookstart; Book Ahead; Baby Boogie; Chatterbooks, and Homework Clubs. We also provide many targeted cultural and learning events and activities throughout the year. Nearly 30,000 children have attended 1,380 events or activities in Libraries in 2009-10.

- **Where do you see any gaps in provision?**

- Outside of the Library Service and Brighton & Hove Children's Festival there is a lack of free and low cost activities during the school holidays
- Outside of the Library Service and the Royal Pavilion & Museums there is a lack of free activities for the very young, 5 and under.
- There is only sporadic engagement from smaller, hard to reach groups, audience development work is happening in the city but needs to increase. A significant amount of work has been undertaken over the last two years in supporting Looked after Children to develop their musical skills. This work has been evaluated by Roehampton University the findings of which will soon be published which we have been informed should be shared nationally. However, There is capacity to significantly widen and deepen this work with external funding needed to be found to sustain the work.
- There is a lot of great work happening in the city but we lack a central point where people can find out about what's happening and investigate possible links between projects.
- Lack of resources is the primary reason for work not getting done.
- Gap in provision from Libraries perspective is for teenagers, especially older ones

- **What has been achieved by the Express strategy?**

- The Express strategy has started the ball rolling in terms of raising the profile of cultural provision for young people in the city and of identifying agreed ways of maximising existing resources and finding simple ways to make positive changes to provision in the city, whilst the funding is pending. As a result of the process of putting together the strategy communication between schools and the cultural sector has significantly improved, a dedicated Arts Officer has been appointed in the Youth Offending Team and a dedicated Arts Companion has been identified for each school in the city. The number of schools achieving Arts Mark has significantly grown with nearly 50% of all schools achieving the award

- **Some of the actions in the Express Strategy are on course (eg an Arts Award) but others aren't – what hasn't been achieved and why not?**

- The Express strategy action plan has been submitted to Arts Council on two separate occasions, over the last three years, and both after extensive feedback from Arts Council themselves. The first time the bid was overridden by the Find Your Talent Bid process that arts

council recommended the council bid for and the second time due to artistic input ie they wanted more artists to be involved in the projects.

- **What is the current take-up of cultural activities in the city?**

- The demand for activity in the city is very high. Current take up for low cost and free events is very high. The recent Children's Festival saw 6000 children plus their families coming to events across 7 days. Take up for ticketed events is mixed, some venues have established family audiences such as Brighton Dome and Festival and the Museums but other venues struggle to fill venues for family events.

Royal Pavilion & Museums: Several family days are run every year across the service sites. Divali at Brighton Museum has been very popular several years in a row attracting annually around 1,500 people, roughly 60% of this audience being children. The recent Egypt day attracted 2,500 visitors and the same number in March of last year, again 60% were children. The temporary exhibition 'Precious' at Hove museum included an activity room for children and attracted over 6000 visitors in February alone of this year. Alice in Wonderland at Preston Manor was put on over Easter as part of the Children's Festival and 'sold out' immediately. Feedback for all of these events has been very positive.

Work with under-5s has been going on since the 1980s and the provision has grown hugely in the last few years. We have been able to appoint an Early Years Officer due to Renaissance funding who now works with all of the Children's Centres across the city, taking museum objects into the centres and running storytelling and play sessions. We also run Early Years sessions on a bi-weekly basis on our three museum sites. Over the last two years we have worked with over 10,300 under-fives across the city.

The RP&M has three large partnership projects in progress. One is funded via the V&A as part of a national strategy. This project has run for six years working with local secondary schools and with Action for Children. For the last two years this project has been called *Design Your Life* and has culminated in a fashion show run in partnership with Brighton University. This show is being taken to the V&A on 26th April 2010. Another partnership is with Cardinal Newman School as part of their Humanities special status. This enables us to work closely with the school on special projects and through them with other schools across the city. In partnership with the British Museum we are taking part in a national project *World Stories*, for the learning part of this we have worked with Cardinal Newman School on the *World of Interiors* project. On this project children worked with a professional artist/photographer on work that reinterpreted the Royal Pavilion through the eyes and experience of the young people. This work went on display in February 2010 on the South Balcony of Brighton Museum & Art Gallery.

In Libraries and Information Services, the take up of services to children & young people is high: Nearly 30,000 children have attended 1,380 events or activities in Libraries in 2009-10. This is in addition to the core service of lending books, toys, music, DVDs, and other items, and also the support for learning that is given by staff in libraries on a day to day basis.

Events that have been highly successful include:

- Range of children's activities during Black History Month aimed at children from BME backgrounds – film showings, craft activities
- Home Front – range of interactive events and activities to raise awareness in 0-19 year olds about WWII, working with a number of city-wide partners
- Write the Future – an annual writing competition for 7-11 year olds, working in partnership with local schools and hosting award event at Jubilee Library
- Off by Heart – working in partnership with the BBC and local schools in promoting national poetry competition. South East regional heat event held in Jubilee Library

(More details and examples will be given at the session with input from Libraries in May)

- **Communication between schools, arts organisations and the Council has been highlighted as a problem – what would you agree?**
 - This comes back to the lack of a central co-ordinating point which has been addressed in the Express Strategy. Communication is better but slightly ad hoc and there is a need for a website and a dedicated post to create mechanisms for better communication between all parties.
 - Over the last five years, and partly as a result of receiving funding from the Renaissance project, the learning service at RP&M has made great steps in improving its contact with schools, both primary and secondary. In order to devise and deliver what teachers want we have collaborated directly with schools, holding teachers' focus group panels to address their needs. A member of the team attends the Art Network meetings (bi-monthly meetings of secondary level art teachers) and another attends a similar forum in Humanities. Continual Professional Development for teachers is regularly held at the museums. All sessions are evaluated, gaining feedback from teachers and pupils that inform changes and development.
- **Funding – the Find Your Talent bid for funding was not successful – what impact has this had?**
 - The process of pulling together the Find Your Talent bid was very useful for us as a city and although we weren't successful it reinforced the need for the work we are doing. Not being successful meant that

the delivery of Express has been delayed but the core work is still being delivered and the strategy works as a focus for partners shaping future plans.

- The national focus on cultural engagement for children and young people reflected through the priority areas of organisations such as Arts Council England, the Cultural Olympiad and Heritage Lottery helps to strengthen our standpoint of the arts being a key part in the development of the city's youngest residents.
- **What is being done to attract other funding (including European)?**
- The Express Bid is going back to Arts Council this summer and will be looking at a slightly different programme with the same key focus. The strategy will also be refreshed and a digital element will be included in line with arts council's focus on digital media.
- MAS is presently developing a bid the Youth Music to develop music opportunities in Whitehawk community and Sussex Sports Partnership to develop dance opportunities.
- The Music Trust is presently considering a number of fun raising activities, such as a 24 concert, 'Soundmakers' music session for adults and Big Band Karaoke
- A 2 seas Interreg bid will also be submitted this year which will be a collaboration between Brighton & Hove, Rotterdam, Amiens and Ghent. This project will allow each city to engage with a high profile artist who will work with the city's most vulnerable children and young people to create a piece of work which will tour the cities. A piece of research will also be commissioned alongside the project looking at the best way of evaluating cultural provision.
- Libraries Services are also preparing an Interreg bid with Amien focussing on services to young people which will be submitted next year.

