

Appendix 1

Cultural Provision for Children and Young People – Report Summary for Council

1.0 About this Panel

- 1.1 The Panel was set up by the Culture, Tourism & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CTEOSC) and consisted of Councillor Melanie Davis (Chair), Councillor Rachel Fryer, and Councillor Carol Theobald. The Panel agreed its terms of reference as:

“To consider the provision of cultural services for children and young people across the city, both by B&HCC and by other organisations; to look at the current deployment of resources; to identify any gaps in provision; and to identify areas of good practice, with a view to making recommendations for the future of cultural services for children and young people in the city.”

The Panel held three half day evidence gathering sessions and one Round Table meeting. A list of witnesses is included at the end of this report.

2.0 What are cultural activities?

- 2.1 For the purpose of the Inquiry, the Panel decided broadly to use the definition of cultural activities in the Express strategy, namely:

Creative Makers – painting, drawing, writing, constructing, building, composing, filming, designing;

Creative Performers – acting, singing, dancing, exhibiting, broadcasting, playing;

Creative Audiences – watching, listening, discussion, criticising, learning, communicating, reading;

Creative Leaders – directors, producers, curators, managers, choreographers, teachers, conducting.

3.0 Why are cultural activities important?

- 3.1 It is widely acknowledged that engagement in the arts helps children and young people increase their confidence, social skills and self esteem. It also develops transferable skills such as creative imagination and problem solving.

4.0 Recommendations

Recommendation 1

- 4.1 The city has a well deserved reputation as a city of culture. There are many groundbreaking events and a wide range of activities on offer in the city. Perhaps as a consequence of this, to some extent the city misses out in terms of regional and national initiatives aimed at increasing and improving arts and cultural provision for young people. The assumptions of both the Arts Council England and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport appear to be that good practice is commonplace across the city and therefore they award funding to areas where provision is generally poorer. The Panel appreciates that the city does much well, but it is important that funding streams are accessible, both to maintain the high quality of the cultural offer, and to ensure fair and equitable access for all children and young people across the city.
- 4.2 Following another bid for funding being turned down, the Culture, Tourism & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt it was timely to re-examine this area, with a view to commenting on the Express strategy (see below) and its relevance today. Since the Panel started its Inquiry, the Express strategy has started to be re-examined and re-framed.
- 4.3 The **Express strategy** for the arts was the first joint strategy between Children’s Services and Cultural Services. It stated that all children, whatever their cultural background should be able to engage with, and be inspired by the highest quality arts and cultural activity that the city can offer. This is also reflected in one of the ambitions in the Children and Young People’s Plan.¹
- 4.4 This clearly links two different parts of the Council - Children’s Services and Cultural Services and requires clear co-ordination between the two. The Panel maintained that in addition to receiving existing performance reports and reports on specific issues, the Children’s Trust Board should be receiving information on the way that different parts of the Council are working together to achieve the stated ambition on arts and cultural activity. The Board should receive information on what has been achieved so far and what is proving problematic in terms of children and young people engaging with arts and cultural activities.

Recommendation 1: *The city’s cultural offer should be fully available to all children and young people. The council’s cultural and children’s services need to ensure that joint working exists to fully exploit opportunities. Joint work and achievements should*

¹ “...children and young people from 0-19 from all cultural backgrounds, to be able to engage with, to enjoy, and to be inspired by the highest quality sports, arts and cultural activity that the city can offer.”

be reported annually to CYPT and then to the Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CTEOSC).

Recommendation 2 (Communication)

- 4.5 **The Panel believes that there is an urgent need for central coordination point to be created *and publicised* as a core source of information for practitioners, children and young people, parents/carers and teachers to find out what is going on in the city.**
- 4.6 During the Panel's Round Table meeting in June 2010, there was a discussion about the idea of a web-based resource. There was a widespread recognition that there was no central resource, but issues were raised over how any website could work, how it would be updated, and who would be expected to use it. The Panel felt that, all things considered, it would be a useful exercise to explore the option of creating a web-based resource, how it could work, and how it could benefit a wide range of people. The Panel does not, however, expect any website to be part of the Brighton & Hove City Council website but to be independently run and maintained.
- 4.7 The Panel agreed with various witnesses who pointed out the importance of involving young people in devising projects. As part of the preparation for any web-resource, young people's views should be sought. This could be through the existing Youth Council, as well as asking parents and children more widely. The Panel heard from Blatchington Mill School that they are intending to appoint an arts leader for each year group to feedback on arts projects. These young people could provide a valuable resource for views and opinions on what should be on a web page.

Recommendation 2: The panel recommends that the council develops a dedicated website. This web-site would allow children/young people, teachers, parents, and practitioners to access information about projects, events and funding opportunities across the city. This should include a forum for swapping expertise and asking questions. There should also be a system to alert registered users to new and relevant items put on the website.

- 4.8 It is worth noting here that there is also no physical central information point. Many people will not have access to the Internet, or it may not be their preferred means of accessing information. The issue of physical space in the city is dealt with later in this report.

Recommendation 3 (Co-ordination)

- 4.9 The council can be perceived as a large faceless organisation and it is important that there is a clear first point of contact to lead on cultural entitlement for children and young people in the city. A named officer should act as a ‘gatekeeper’ to signpost towards teams in the council (for example, youth offending service, volunteering team, communities’ team). This named person would also be responsible for drawing together the relevant strands of existing strategies (for example, the Children and Young Peoples’ Plan, the Cultural Strategy and the Express strategy). They would also be involved in ensuring that there was regular contact between these different areas of the council. It is often presumed that different parts of the same organisation will be in regular contact with each other, but given the complexity of an organisation like the council, this is often not the case. Officers across the council could benefit from the naming of one person as a first point of contact.

Recommendation 3: The Panel recommends that there is a single point of first contact within the council for people who wish to discuss arts and cultural activities for children and young people in the city. This role would also be an active one of co-ordination and information dissemination.

Recommendation 4 (Jubilee Library)

- 4.10 During the course of private discussions, Panel members expressed concern that the Jubilee Library does not have a central notice board that can be used to publicise events and activities. The Panel requested clarification on the policy on what information can be made available in the Jubilee Library, what is not allowed, and the reasons why not. The Library has a policy on how it priorities the information on the notice board. There is also a community diary in each library, including the Jubilee Library, where one hard copy of any publication can be placed. Nonetheless, the Panel believes that there is a need for an easily accessible central notice board to provide information. At the very least, this notice board should inform people of the existence of the community diary and encourage them to consult it.

Recommendation 4: The Panel recommends that there is visible central notice board in the Jubilee Library. This notice board should publicise the existence of the community diary and encourage people to access it.

Recommendations 5, 6, and 7 (Venues)

Performance venues

- 4.11 The issue of affordable and appropriate venues was raised with the Panel. If young people participating in, for example, dance events, musicals, or fashion shows, can perform in specialised venues and gain real experience of professional theatres or stages, it would help

enormously to improve the quality of their artistic experience. The Panel was told how young people had reacted very positively to the experience of performing in expert venues.

- 4.12 **As part of the refresh of the Express Strategy, the target should be amended to reflect the need for ‘appropriate’ venues and for partners to commit to work together to enable more children and young people to have the opportunity to perform in some of the fantastic venues the city has to offer.**

Recommendation 5: The Panel recommends that the council should actively work with venues in the city to find ways to enable young people to perform in venues with professional type facilities. For example, closer communication between the venues team and the youth services team may ease some of the problems those working with young people are encountering in finding suitable venues. This may be as simple as working to ensure that venues and their staff meet the young performers in advance, and are made more familiar with the differences between different performers. There are obvious examples of good practice and this should be shared across venues in the city.

Practice and meeting spaces

- 4.13 There are problems with the availability of venues and spaces *specifically for young people* in the city. There is a lack of clearly signposted places where information on what is going on is available; a shortage of areas that can be used as practice space; and a paucity of appropriate and affordable venues. Additionally, there is currently a lack of places for young people to go in Central Brighton.
- 4.14 Those at the Round Table meeting agreed that it would be worth exploring using the Brighton Youth Centre (BYC) as a venue for a central ‘hub’ for cultural activities for young people. **Mindful of the economic climate, the Panel believes that the BYC should be considered, possibly as a pilot scheme, for development into a hub for young people.**

Recommendation 6: The Panel recommends that steps are taken to increase the use of the Brighton Youth Centre as a central place for young people to be involved in cultural activities. The council should promote BYC as a place to meet, to discuss projects, and to find out information on cultural activities.

Community Centres

- 4.15 The Panel is aware of some of the various activities going on in different community venues around the city. The Circus Project told the Panel that they performed in the Hangleton Community Centre. The Youth Art Project uses such venues as Patcham YC, Hollingdean, Whitehawk YC, Falmer High, and Downsview Link College. However, the Panel felt that it would be helpful to know in more detail which

community centres are holding arts and cultural activities, and to explore ways in which these centres could be more fully utilised both as a venue and as a place to find information. **There is currently a lack of clearly identified physical places where people can go to find out information about what is going on, and where.**

- 4.16 An audit of what space is available - for example, what centres have sprung dance floors that could be used as a practice space - would be very helpful. Awareness of different events and activities going on across the city, with the associated exchange of information and sharing of good practice, would all go towards creating spaces in different areas of the city where children and young people can take part in, or learn about, different arts events and activities. The community centres could be informed by, and submit information to, any new web-based central resource (see Recommendation 2.) By utilising community centres in this way, more young people will be given the opportunity to try out different arts and cultural activities.

Recommendation 7: There is currently a lack of clearly identified physical places for young people to go to find out information about what is happening in the arts. The Panel recommends that an audit is undertaken of all community centres/venues in the city and their current usage. Following on from this, the facilities and resources available should be publicised as widely as possible.

Recommendation 8 (Young offenders and the hard-to-reach)

- 4.17 Officers from the Youth Offending Service (YOS) explained that the young people they worked with were often not in school, may be homeless and have problems with drugs and alcohol. They did not access the mainstream provision of services of any sort in the city and often had no family support. The post of Arts Project Worker was created within the YOS to provide targeted assistance to young offenders and re-offenders. A wide range of projects including film, fashion, creative writing, exhibitions, music, and singing lessons were offered (along with other organisations). These projects were excellent for raising self-esteem and providing a free space for young people to say what they wanted. **The Panel welcomed the news that there is a full time Arts Worker within the Youth Offending Service. The Panel appreciate that this means that case workers may have heavier case loads but are fully supportive of the importance of a full time Arts Worker.**
- 4.18 One of the main problems facing the YOS team was that the projects are not sustainable under current financial arrangements. The Panel recognised that in the current financial climate, there is limited scope for additional funding. **Nonetheless, the Panel supports any attempts to embed arts projects in the whole social work team and thus create more sustainable projects.**

- 4.19 The Panel suggested that there would be merit in putting in place mechanisms to help young offenders to take part in mainstream arts projects where appropriate. They were told that there is an issue of reinforced identity: that is, if high risk repeat offenders are mainly with other young offenders, then their mutual sense of themselves as young offenders can be reinforced. Anything that could be done to integrate young people into mainstream arts projects would be very beneficial. The Youth Offending Service felt they were not always aware of all the cultural opportunities in the city, nor invited to take part in these activities.
- 4.20 It is clear that there needs to be a robust two-way relationship between those working with young offenders and those working in cultural services. For example, seconding people between the two strands of the council would go a great way to promote understanding and further communication.

Recommendation 8: The benefit of accessing cultural activities for young people should be more widely recognised. The council and others offering arts and cultural projects should as a matter of course seek to involve young people not in mainstream education. Consideration should be given to ways of including marginalised children, particularly young offenders or those in challenging circumstances - and, if they can not be included, reasons given as to why not.

- 4.21 The funding of arts activities for young people, and those not in mainstream education in particular, should not be seen as an optional extra. If one of the desired outcomes for the city is a reduction in reoffending rates, then the value of the arts must be widely understood and accepted as a tool for achieving this. Additionally, the benefits of cultural activities in terms of self confidence and increased awareness will help young people in other ways. **Co-ordinated service design through the council's new approach to commissioning must ensure sustainable funding for arts and culture to ensure these wider priorities are deliverable.**

Recommendation 9 (Corporate parenting)

- 4.22 The council has an important responsibility towards the children in its care. These children are encouraged and supported to achieve their potential and fulfil their aspirations. In Brighton & Hove this role of Corporate Parent will be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Forum led by Councillors from all parties who will take account of the views and opinions of children and young people.

Recommendation 9: The council as a corporate parent has a responsibility to ensure that all children in its care have access to, and support for, involvement in cultural activities as part of their

programme of care. This is an area that requires significant development.

Recommendation 10 (Cultural activities and the curriculum)

4.23 Schools have a pivotal role to play in engaging children and young people in arts and cultural activities. It is at school that children's awareness of, and interest in, the arts can be stimulated - and taken beyond the school gates.

4.24 The Panel felt there was an issue around gaining the involvement of schools and were disappointed that they did not manage to get information from all schools. **The Panel did not have the resources or the time to carry out a full audit but this would be a useful exercise.**

Libraries and Museums interaction with schools

4.25 The Panel was told that 11,540 children went on class visits to the libraries across the city last year. In terms of areas for future development, the Libraries Service told the Panel they found it harder to reach children aged 12 and above. They were aware of the need to work more closely with partners to identify children with specific needs.

4.26 The Museums' Learning Manager, Royal Pavilion and Museums (RP&M), told the Panel that they worked mainly with primary schools and had found it much harder to work with secondary schools. Often the problems were practical ones relating to staff cover or travel costs. They did do some work with secondary schools – one example was a fashion show with recycled clothing that ended up in the Victoria & Albert Museum. The Panel were told that one of the issues was how to involve different schools: they often found that they were working with the same schools.

Recommendation 10: Logistical barriers (such as transport or staff cover) that are preventing secondary schools from fully working with the libraries and museums service need to be overcome. These services need to do as much as possible to identify and remove the obstacles. Closer collaboration with named people in all schools, including secondary schools, should help facilitate closer ties.

Recommendation 11 (Arts Champion in schools)

4.27 The Panel was told that one of the tasks of the temporary arts development officer role (until November 2010) would be to look at the Express strategy. As part of this, they will update the database of 'Arts Champions' (or arts contacts) in each school. The idea of an Arts Champion arose out of the Express strategy and was a welcome one.

There seem to be some informal networks of arts teachers that already exist but it would be useful to have a more formal and easily identifiable network. During the Panel's Inquiry, the point was made that it is important to reach children when they are still young and to engage them in the arts at an early age. The Arts Champions in schools could have an important role in this.

Recommendation 11: *The Panel recommends that each school identifies one person to be the cultural lead to advise on arts and cultural activities available both in and outside of school, and whose role is to link into other schools and arts groups across the city.*

Recommendation 12 (Creative Partnerships, Sussex and Surrey)

4.28 Creative Partnerships is an organisation that aims to make the curriculum more accessible to young people by providing more creative ways to engage with the curriculum, and increase motivation for learning. It was funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and by the Department for Education (DfE). However, this funding is ending in July 2011 and Creative Partnerships told the Panel that they were now looking at a future offer to schools that builds on the learning from the Creative Partnerships programmes and continues to support schools in developing creativity of their pupils and staff.

4.29 *Recommendation 12: It would be beneficial for Creative Partnerships to become more involved with the Governors Network. The council's Governor Support Team should find ways to take this forward in schools. The Panel request that a report back on this is brought to the Children and Young People's Overview & Scrutiny Committee (CYPOSC) in twelve months time.*

Recommendation 13 (After school clubs)

4.30 Many of the schools in the city offer after school clubs including dance, drama and music. However, it was not clear how easily accessible and how affordable they were. The importance of engaging children in a wide variety of activities out of school was not in doubt and the city must do all it can to ensure activities are open to all, regardless of age or wealth. Due to a lack of resources and time, and given the current uncertain climate, the Panel were not in a position to comment on what was available and at what cost. An audit of what is available and who accesses it, would, however, be a useful exercise.

4.31 The Panel were interested to learn about the *Ride the Wave* programme providing funding to help ensure that out-of-hours activities were accessible to pupils who would not otherwise be able to afford them.

Recommendation 13: *The Panel recommends that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CYPOSC) receives a report in 2011 on the number of children who engage in after school activities as a result of the Ride the Wave programme.*

Recommendation 14 (Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks)

- 4.32 The issue of CRB checks arose during the Panel's discussions. Comments were made suggesting that CRB checks for arts practitioners were not transferable across schools or organisations in the city. Parent volunteers were also not clear about whether or not a CRB check in one school or organisation is transferable to another. This is indicative of the confusion that currently surrounds the system for CRB checks.

Recommendation 14: *The Panel recommends that the Chief Executive of Brighton & Hove City Council writes to the Home Secretary to request that the reform of the system of CRB checks is conducted quickly in order to establish a clear system of transferable CRB certificates. Once it is known what the new system will entail, there is a role for the council in disseminating this information to ensure that schools and arts practitioners are very clear about the arrangements for CRB checking.*

5.0 Conclusions

The Panel were left with the impression that often it is the same schools, the same families, and the same children who are really making the most of what the city has to offer. It is time to concentrate on widening the accessibility of events, without any deterioration in quality. The Panel hopes this report will help the council and its partners achieve this aim.

Recommendation 15: *Implementation of these recommendations will be undertaken after 6 and 12 months.*

Timetable of meetings

Wednesday 31 March 2010 - 4.30pm

Founder's Room, Brighton Dome and Festival

James Dougan, Assistant Director, Children & Young People's Trust, B&HCC
Julia Box, Youth Arts Development Worker, B&HCC
Emma Fincham, Central Area Manager, CYPT, B&HCC
Lucy Stone, Project Director, Rhythmix
Peter Chivers, Head of Brighton & Hove Music Advisory and Support Service (BHMAS)

Wednesday 28 April 2010 - 11am

The Lecture Room, Friends Meeting House, Brighton

Cllr David Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Enterprise
Cllr Vanessa Brown, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Karen McCallum, Head Teacher, Patcham Junior School
Catherine Orbach, Director, Creative Partnership, Sussex and Surrey

Jo Bates, Youth Arts Worker, B&HCC

Nigel Andain, Head of the Youth Offending Service, B&HCC

Wednesday 19 May 2010 - 11am

Conference Room 1, Jubilee Library

Pippa Smith, Head of Education, Learning & Participation, Brighton Dome and Festival
Adam Joolia, Director, AudioActive
Julia Basnett, Museums' Learning Manager, Royal Pavilion and Museums, B&HCC
Kate Rouse, Jubilee and Central Services Manager, Libraries and Information Service, B&HCC
Kirsty Sulston, Head of Community and Learning, South East Dance

Wednesday 30 June 2010 - 4pm

Round Table meeting, The Komedia

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

