

## **Executive Response to the Scrutiny Panel on Cultural Provision for Children and Young People**

### **1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 This report outlines the Executive response to the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel on Cultural Provision for Children and Young People set up by the Culture Tourism & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Panel (CTEOSC).

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (1) To congratulate the panel on the detailed and well informed work undertaken to produce their report.
- (2) To mandate commissioners to make best use of existing resources to act upon these informed findings in shaping delivery as detailed in the body of the report.

### **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 The Culture, Tourism & Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CTEOSC) set up this Ad-Hoc Scrutiny Panel 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.
- 3.2 The panel comprised of Cllr Melanie Davis (Chair), Cllr Rachel Fryer and Cllr Carol Theobald. More than 28 representatives from the city council, the formal education, youth service, the youth offending team and from cultural organisations were consulted over 4 group meetings in March, April, May and June 2010.
- 3.3 The report outlined 15 recommendations structured around themes, and these are used to form the basis of the Executive Response:
- 3.4 **General**  
**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 be reported***

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

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

The council's Arts Development Officer and the Team leader from Music and Study Support in CYPT have had regular meetings to revisit, refresh and move forward the aims of *Express*, the strategy for the development of arts for young people.

This has led to:

- Two consultation events which were arranged for representatives from the city council, education, youth service and arts, cultural and creative industry sector
- The creation of city-wide regular *Express Network Meetings* which take place every 10 weeks and which are hosted and chaired by different organisations each time
- An *Express blog* and mailout system that all members can access and add to ( <http://bhartsexpress.posterous.com>)
- The formation of the *Express Youth Participation Group*.

In addition to this, the Arts team will be taking on an apprenticeship post for a six month period beginning in March to focus specifically on cultural provision for children and young people

The longer term ambition for the *Express Youth Participation Group* would be to develop it into a Youth Arts Commission linking to the Brighton and Hove Arts Commission.

More widely, the council's move to a commissioning model should provide opportunities to seek to ensure better joint working across services and with external partners. Arts and culture is represented, for example, on the Youth Commissioning /Delivery Partnership Meeting to ensure that cultural provision is embedded in city wide strategies around positive outcomes for children and young people and to ensure joint working across the council.

### **3.5 Communication and Information**

The city enjoys a massively vibrant and diverse culture and arts scene – this needs to be more actively communicated to children, young people and their carers, therefore:

***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 cit.***

The Music and Study Support Team have collated an up to date list of arts contacts at most of the schools across the city. This list has been created on

the basis of self nomination and there are currently gaps. One of the tasks of the apprenticeship post will be to target those schools again to identify a lead contact person. A programme of involvement in the wider cultural activity in the city is in development specifically for the arts lead contacts in schools.

In addition, the *Express blog* membership (discussed more fully below) continues to grow including the involvement of schools' staff.

***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 (linked to recommendation 11) (p. 20).***

The provision and promotion of arts and cultural activity for children and young people is a priority that would feature in the commissioning objectives of the Commissioner for Culture. This role should be a contact point for further signposting. In terms of active co-ordination and information dissemination; these would be commissioned across a range of services and partners in addition to the online dissemination recommended below.

***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***

There is a two part response to this recommendation:

In terms of creating a web based resource that young people will use and share: the city council is working with Lighthouse, Photoworks and the Brighton Photo Biennial to help them to build on **Viewfinder**; a web based visual arts resource, owned and populated by young people. **Viewfinder** has the potential to encourage and empower young people across the city to discuss and share their cultural experiences across all cultural forms as well as the visual arts and the council is currently sourcing additional funding to expand this resource.

In terms of a web based resource that works as an interactive database of events and opportunities for a wider audience, the council is continuing to develop the *Express* blog, which currently has 200 users. The blog is free to join and is regulated by the Arts Development Officer. The profile of users is wider than Viewfinder and includes schools, artists, arts organisations, youth centres and community centres.

***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 (p.21).***

There are visible notice boards in Jubilee Library, from the foyer through into the main part of the library which are used to display posters. There is also a set of shelves with room to put leaflets, leaflet racks and a table for more prominent items. If there is not enough room to display every leaflet, one reference copy is kept in the Community events folder which is available for the public. In response to this recommendation, we intend to advertise this service more prominently on these notice boards.

The Library Service has a leaflets and posters policy that explains what items will be given priority for display in libraries which is attached at Appendix One.

In the longer term, subject to funding, we would very much like to install electronic notice boards for library and community use; these would have the advantage of being instant and responsive to opportunities.

### **3.6 Venues**

***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 re 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.***

This is one of the considerations of the *Express Network Group* whose members include cultural venues, youth centres and schools. This group meets regularly at the moment with administrative support provided by the Arts Development Officer post.

In addition, subject to funding, a training package for venues focussed on working successfully with young people will be developed.

***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.***

Mike Roe is the new Chief Executive Officer of Brighton Youth Centre; he is participating in the *Express Network* meetings and Chairs the *Express Youth Participation Group* with the aim of making the facilities more accessible for young people's 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***

The last *Express Network* meeting held in January of this year focussed on the issue of spaces for cultural provision for young people. A number of suggestions were made from that which will be taken forward via the *Express blog*. Rather than a published directory, the blog will be used to provide information about spaces and opportunities as they become available. The blog will be actively managed by the Arts Development Officer post in order to keep it relevant and up to date.

### **3.7 Relevance of the arts to all**

**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***

There is a range of targeted activity that the council provides currently on a project basis; Brighton Museum for example is working with a group of young people who are long term unemployed and not in education on a photography project that will culminate in an exhibition and the young people gaining a Bronze Art Award. The Museum is also focussing on working with young people with mental health problems, with disability and setting up a Young Carers programme.

There is a desire from the providers of cultural activity for young people to reach all young people across the city. In order to do this they require more information as to gaps, city priorities and current mechanisms for accessing these young people. Equally there is the desire from those working with excluded young people to ensure that the children in their care can access positive experiences and the best that the city has to offer: cultural opportunities are at the centre of this. The draft Youth Commissioning Strategy offers much of this targeted information and the opportunity to make connections.

For the future, in addition to the range of project work that will continue, although often subject to external funding, the requirement to consider ways of including marginalised young people will be a baseline of all commissioning of cultural activity for 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.***

A pilot programme of activity; Try it with a Friend was run as a pilot last year in conjunction with the Independent Visitor Co-ordinator in the Youth, Advocacy and Participation Team. This programme provided 50 children in care with two tickets each to go and see or take part in any cultural activity in the city. The funding for this was from the 2010 Children's Festival budget.

Building on the success of this, we will work with partners to continue and expand this area of provision both in terms of providing opportunities to take part and attend events as well as volunteering.

**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 (p.33).***

Undoubtedly where there are close working relationships with schools, provision is most successful and this must continue and expand. An example of particularly good practice would be Patcham Library which has been opening on an extra morning a week so that pupils from Patcham High School can use the library as part of their reading and literacy improvement programme. This cooperation has been extended with the support of a grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, and the new programme will focus on speaking, listening and reading skills.

Additionally, there is much that takes place off site; our museums service provides a loan service for schools that is well used and covers nursery and reception through to 'A' Level. Specimens from the Booth Museum can be borrowed for a very small fee and there are several loan boxes that include lesson plans and resource notes in addition to museum items, which support areas of the National Curriculum.

**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***

The future of Creative Partnerships is unclear as their funding was cut in the October spending review. The Arts Council of England have confirmed that they will continue to invest in high quality cultural provision for young people but have not specified a mechanism for this. We remain in dialogue with ACE

and with ACE funded cultural providers how we can play a role in ensuring investment and activity can continue to take place and improve.

**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 Criminal Records Bureau (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***

In 2010 the Government was due to implement a new scheme called 'vetting and barring' which was to replace the CRB system. The subsequent Coalition Government announced that the proposed vetting and barring system was too complex. The initiative for change has been put on hold, with a plan to launch a much scaled down version at the beginning of 2012. At that point, the local authority could take part in any consultation around this. Meanwhile CRBs are still valid and can still be applied for in the usual way.

**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***

This was a two year initiative from central government due to end in the summer of 2011. This was to provide funding for activity for children on a targeted basis to take part in an extended schools programme. In the first year this funding was made available to the Moulsecoomb cluster of schools and rolled out to all schools in the second year. The funding went directly to schools on a per capita basis of children in the targeted category. Information on the success of this is currently being collated.

The programme is due to complete in August of this year at which point a report will be made available from Ellen Jones, Head of Extended Services Team.

- 3.8 In addition to the recommendations in the report, it is also proposed by the executive to **prioritise external bid writing** in order to bring in resources to this area and to explore best practice nationally and internationally. International partners in Rotterdam, Ghent and Antwerp have confirmed that they are interested in joint projects for example.
- 3.9 Further to this, it is also recommended by the executive that the Children's Festival, organised by the B&HCC and the Arts Commission, is expanded to include all age ranges, subject to fundraising. The Festival is aiming to become a major showcase of good practice in cultural provision for young people across the city and an opportunity for young people to identify year round cultural opportunities.

- 3.10 Since the writing of the Ad Hoc Panel Scrutiny Report, another key issue to consider is the review by Darren Henley commissioned by the Department of Education and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The key findings of this and the subsequent Government response have positive implications for the provision of music education in Brighton and Hove. A National Music Plan will be developed and a key recommendation is the formation of delivery hubs. Clearly, there is the potential to build upon the work of *Express* in creating a 'music education hub' for the city; to bid for resources, to deliver in a co-ordinated way and to make the most of the range of partners we have.
- 3.11 Following the publication of this review, the Government have also announced that Darren Henley will be commissioned to produce a further review with a wider scope looking at a wider scope in terms of cultural education. The exact terms of this are due for publication soon.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 There has been consultation with the Music and Performing Arts Service, Museums, Libraries, Brighton Festival and Dome, Youth Service.

#### **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

##### **5.1 Financial Implications:**

It is not possible to quantify the financial implications at this stage. However, any additional costs arising from the actions identified will need to be funded from either external funding, as indicated in the report, or existing resources across the Authority. It would therefore be necessary to ensure that all concerned parties were kept aware of developments and the potential impact on their budgets.

*Finance Officer Consulted:* Michelle Herrington *Date:* 03/03/11

##### **5.2 Legal Implications:**

There are no adverse legal implications directly arising from this report

*Lawyer Consulted:* Bob Bruce *Date:* 02/03/11

##### **5.3 Equalities Implications:**

The implementation of all the proposed recommendations would be in line with the Councils Equalities and Inclusion standard. The report notes the importance of targeting our most excluded young people.

##### **5.4 Sustainability Implications:**

The implementation of all of the proposed recommendations in the ad-hoc panel report would have positive implications in terms of sustainability.

##### **5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:**



Any initiatives or programmes implemented that provide positive activities for young people, particularly those most at risk will have a positive impact in reducing the likelihood of crime and disorder.

5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

If the ad-hoc panel report recommendations are not implemented, there is a risk that the city will begin to lose its edge as a cultural city. This drives economic benefits – for residents, businesses and the visitor economy as well as social benefits – in terms of social inclusion, health and well-being and civic identity.

5.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

The implementation of the recommendations in the ad-hoc panel report would have a positive impact on young people and the cultural sector in the city and therefore would be citywide.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 The responses under each Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel Recommendation have been arrived at through evaluating what is feasible, affordable, building on need and where initiatives already taking place.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 The ad-hoc panel report drew on a detailed level of expertise and current information from a range of providers across the youth, education and cultural sectors. The resulting recommendations were extremely well informed and offer a number of useful and pragmatic ways forward for the development of this key subsector.

7.2 In the view of all of the witnesses who presented to the ad-hoc panel, cultural opportunity is valued as an important tool for engaging with and empowering young people and is one that Brighton and Hove should actively develop. Many of the preconditions for growth in this area were identified in Brighton and Hove by the panel's findings and examples of good practice of an international standing, shared and celebrated in the report.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:** Appendix One: Jubilee Library Poster policy

## Community Information in Brighton & Hove City Libraries

We provide comprehensive, unbiased, wide-ranging local and other useful information. We offer local communities a number of ways to publicise their organisation and activities:

### Local Information

- ESCIS- the local information database for Brighton & Hove and East Sussex with information on approximately 1000 local groups and organisations. Available to everyone via the Internet at [www.escis.org.uk](http://www.escis.org.uk) it is widely consulted and regularly updated. Local organisations may put their details on it free.
- 'Help in Hand.' Printed version of ESCIS issued annually
- Local Information folders containing information on local events and organisations produced by local organisations

### Posters and leaflets

Display of posters or multiple copies of leaflets is principally for:

- Statutory notices
- Library service information
- Council information
- Other public services information
- Some government information
- Range of local education prospectuses

We do not normally display any other posters or leaflets. However, single copies of small posters/flyers advertising local events are kept in the local information folders.

### Procedures

- All material for display must be submitted for scrutiny by the appropriate Library Manager
- Local discretion may be used, within these guidelines, and the manager's decision is final
- We are unable to return any material submitted for display

Where we agree to accept leaflets for a number of libraries, the provider will need to send them directly to each library. The addresses of all libraries are on the 'a guide to your library services leaflet' or at [www.citylibraries.info](http://www.citylibraries.info).

### We do not accept the following for display:

- Material promoting a particular political, philosophical or religious view point
- Campaigning material calling for support, including petitions, requests for membership, donations.
- Controversial or offensive material or material contravening current legislation.