

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CULTURE, TOURISM & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.00PM 30 JUNE 2011

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Brown (Chair); Deane, Farrow, Hawtree, Hyde and A Kitcat and Marsh.

Co-opted Members:

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1.1 Declarations of Substitutes

There were none. Councillor Carol Theobald sent her apologies.

1.2 Declarations of Interests

There were none.

1.3 Declaration of Party Whip

There were none.

1.4 Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 100I (1) of the said Act.

RESOLVED: That the press and public are not excluded from the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The minutes from the 31 March 2011 were agreed.

3. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 The Chair, Councillor Vanessa Brown, welcomed everyone, particularly the new Councillors, to the Committee. Members and officers all introduced themselves. She noted that the Committee had done some valuable work in the past and confirmed her intention to continue to work in an open and inclusive manner. She explained that the committee was not decision-making but it had an important role to play in looking at policies and strategies within its remit and inputting into policy development at an early stage. The Chair then went on to inform the committee of previous and forthcoming events. The Brighton Festival, the Fringe, the Great Escape and the Open Houses had all been great successes. Forthcoming events included Take Part, Paddle round the Pier, and the Race for Life. An exhibition "Keepers" would involve residents showing their collections. Finally the Chair congratulated Resident Records for winning the best independent Record Store in the UK and Concorde 2 for winning best live venue.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 4.1 There were none.

5. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 5.1 Councillor Leigh Farrow introduced his letter requesting that the Committee consider the issue of access to cultural events by older people. Councillor Farrow was concerned that there was a concentration of cultural activities in the centre of the city and they may be inaccessible to older people, both because of location and cost. It was agreed to discuss this issue further under Item 9 on the agenda when the Committee considered its work programme.

6. WHAT IS SCRUTINY?

- 6.1 Giles Rossington, Senior Scrutiny Officer, introduced the item on behalf of Tom Hook, Head of Scrutiny. He explained that the remit of the committee was included in the agenda papers. Scrutiny is a member-led process and the members set their own agendas. As part of this Members needed to think about both the relevance and the timing of any subjects. Consideration should be given to the council's and the city's priorities. The best time to consider issues was often pre-decision when members could input into the policy-setting process. There was merit in looking at policies after implementation, particularly if a problem had arisen, but pre-decision was often more timely. The Committee may find it useful to use the Forward Plan as a tool in agenda-setting. Mr Rossington emphasised that the Scrutiny Team were a resource for Scrutiny Councillors and would be very happy to assist members of the Committee, including carrying out research into specific issues.

7. INTRODUCTION TO CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM

- 7.1 David Murray, Strategic Director, Communities and his team gave a powerpoint presentation (for copy see minute book). Mr Murray outlined what his division covered and members of his team introduced different areas.

- 7.2 Sally McMahon, Head of Library and Information Services told the Committee that the libraries in the city score very well in terms of satisfaction: satisfaction amongst local residents had increased by 27% over 5 years, and for children the satisfaction rating was now the second highest in the country. The libraries also provided very good value for money and had not suffered from the drop in usage other cities had. The libraries were cultural venues as well as supporting lifelong learning. Around half the items borrowed from libraries concerned health and wellbeing so that was also an important role. More services were now on-line and since March 2011 libraries had been involved in Council Connect, helping people access online council services. There was free internet in all libraries - around 68% of library users do not have internet access at home.
- 7.3 Adam Bates, Head of Tourism & Leisure Delivery Unit, introduced sports and leisure on behalf of Ian Shurrock, Commissioner for Leisure. He explained that leisure centres in the city were operated on behalf of the council by a social enterprise Freedom Leisure. The sports and leisure team were also involved in sports development, for example health walks, the older people's Olympics and the current Take Part festival.
- 7.4 Janita Bagshawe, Head of Royal Pavilion and Museums, informed the Committee that there were 620,000 visits to the city's four museums and the Royal Pavilion by the end of 2010. This was an increase of 30,000. There were high levels of satisfaction and the museums and Pavilion made a huge contribution to the city's economy: around £18m from Brighton Museum and £27m from the Pavilion. This in turn was estimated to support around 1,000 FTE jobs. In the place survey which measured the number of adults who visited museums, Brighton had the highest score amongst unitaries outside London. Earned income contributed to over half of the operating budget of the service. They offered a 'cradle to grave' service from early years learning to working with older people. This latter area was one the team were conscious of the need to do more and work more closely in partnerships with other organisations to reach more older people. The team also worked with schools and helped support the voluntary museums in the city (for example the Police, Fishing and Toy Museums).
- 7.5 Mr Bates informed the committee that the city had a number of venues, including the Brighton Centre. The Brighton Centre was a valuable asset that had brought visitors into the city when other seaside places had gone into decline in the 1970s. It continued to bring conferences to the city. Tourism in the city created around 17,000 jobs and generated around £732m.
- 7.6 VisitBrighton was the city's destination marketing tool. Around 400 businesses worked with VisitBrighton: this number was unlikely to increase but there would be further opportunities for collaboration. The Visitor Service provided local information – mainly in an electronic rather than paper form. The Convention Bureau worked to generate business for the city in different venues, for example, the racecourse, the cricket club or the Metropole Hotel.
- 7.7 The outdoor events team supported around 180 events from small community events to the large events like Pride or Paddle round the Pier.
- 7.8 Mr Bates informed the Committee that the council owned and operated 13km of the

seafront. This was a varied area ranging from very busy areas to more quiet ones. The team were thinking coherently about how to make the most of the seafront: which areas were working well and which may need more help.

7.9 The Arts and Cultural Projects team supported a wide range of events, including the very successful White Night. Mr Murray explained how the Commissioner for Culture, Paula Murray, drew together all the threads of the service and worked very closely with other organisations such as the Dome and the Arts Commission. Mr Murray concluded by remarking that whilst culture, recreation and tourism was a very positive, forward-facing portfolio, it also had a serious role to play in many areas including health and community cohesion.

7.10 The Committee then made a number of comments thanking the team for the presentation and asked a range of questions including on the future of the Booth Museum. Ms Bagshawe told the committee that the recent National History Review had looked at maximising the use of the collections and the review would be reporting later this year. A question was asked about the loss of free swimming to the over 65s and Mr Murray told the committee the funding for this had been withdrawn but they were looking at ways of reaching new audiences for swimming. Following a question on the History Centre and the Keep, Mr Murray confirmed that no decision had been made to close the History Centre. In response to a question about maximising the profitability and flexibility of our venues, Mr Bates offered to bring an update to the committee on this issue.

8. INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Geoff Raw, Strategic Director, Place gave a powerpoint presentation (for copy see minute book). Mr Raw told the committee that a recent HSBC and Centre for Cities report had recently identified Brighton & Hove as the number one “Rebellious Alternative Economy”. However, there were no facts in the report to back up the headline. One of the jobs of the economic development team was to provide the facts and figures. The council own a huge number and range of assets and a key question is how to use these assets to strengthen the economy. The economic development team were looking at 3 areas: business and enterprise; employment and skills; and development and investment. The City Employment and Skills Plan (CESP) had a number of targets and objectives and three main priorities, namely: 6,000 jobs by 2014; how to equip local residents to get jobs; and to promote jobs and residents needs to partner organisations. The job market was very competitive and it was challenging to help children who were leaving secondary schools with very average qualifications to get jobs.

8.2 In terms of business support, the Business Link was turning into an online resource. There were a lot of mentors in the city which was a great resource. The Business Retention and Inward Investment (BRII) strategy was owned by the Local Strategic Partnership and the Committee may want to look at the BRII again.

8.3 The economic development team ran services for businesses that needed premises. The lengthy timescale for major infrastructure projects mean they cross a number of different political administrations which can make it difficult for developers. There is perception that it is difficult to do business here. Development in a compact city is controversial and it can be difficult to gain consensus. The Committee could look at doing this better and

challenge officers to do so. The high property values in the city were important to developers who know that they won't lose money.

- 8.4 The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had international trade and entrepreneurship as its two main themes. It will work hard to get the message to central government.
- 8.5 Major projects can be described as facing the 3 'c's': complacency (a risk); collaboration (a strength) and competitiveness.
- 8.6 Members then made a number of comments and asked a range of questions. In answer to a question on the target for jobs, Mr Raw confirmed that 140 new jobs had been created and the target of 6,000 was challenging. The team were liaising closely with universities to help graduates into work. Following a question on a potential media commission, Mr Murray confirmed that filming in the city was currently done on an ad-hoc basis, but they were considering setting up a film unit within the council. Following a question on setting up a new art gallery in the city, Mr Murray confirmed that they were looking at spaces that could be used as temporary arts installation space.

9. SCOPING REPORT FOR SCRUTINY AGENDAS

- 9.1 The Chair introduced the scoping report for Members to determine their future work programme and suggested one presentation and then between four and six items per agenda. It was agreed that Andrew Comben was invited to the September meeting to discuss the Brighton Dome and Festival. It was suggested that Councillor Farrow's agenda item could be taken as a scrutiny panel? Prior to a scrutiny panel being established, a scoping report would be taken to the Committee. Regular update items on the Olympics and the Marathon were also agreed. Mr Murray told the committee that they were putting together a forward plan on what events were happening and how to publicise them – a report on this could be brought to the Committee. A further suggestion was to look at the Music Industry in the city: this had been a previous suggestion for a scrutiny panel. Karen Amsden, Scrutiny Officer, updated the Committee on the establishment of Made In Brighton forum, which was being facilitated by the Arts and Cultural Projects team to help and promote the music industry. The Committee also agreed they would input into the forthcoming library strategy at an appropriate point. It was also suggested that outside organisations could be invited to input into the discussions. It was noted that some subjects (like the draft library plan) may be best dealt with in scrutiny workshops.
- 9.2 It was agreed that the timing of some of the issues need to be clarified and the Chair, Deputy Chair and Green Spokesperson would meet with relevant officers to discuss the work programme further and report back to the Committee in due course.

10. BRIGHTON & HOVE'S PROGRAMME FOR 2012

- 10.1 Mr Murray introduced the report which was an update on the Brighton & Hove's activity in relation to London 2012. There was a lot happening but still some unanswered questions. For example, it was unclear what the route for the torch relay would be, or what activities would be connected to this. It was suggested that a further update report would come to a future meeting of the committee.

RESOLVED: the Committee agreed to receive an update a future meeting.

11. RESIDENTS' CARD SCHEME

11.1 Mr Murray introduced the report and told the Committee that the report was intended to stimulate an early debate on the issue. Thinking and research on a possible Residents' Card was at a very early stage and any input from scrutiny Councillors would be very welcome. There were issues around how to promote services at quiet times, but not create a situation where people who would normally visit somewhere come at a cheaper time. The idea was for residents to have more access to the 'jewels' of the city. Other issues included the possibility of rewarding people for certain actions, for example, volunteering

11.2 There were suggestions that any card could be based on a library card – residents' cards can range from very high tech to paper-based systems. Mr Murray explained that offices would find it helpful to have any suggestions from Members of areas to explore on how to take this further. Members discussed the work young people have done on a 3-in-1 card, and how a residents' card could be used. It was suggested that officers look at what other local authorities have done and look at being as inclusive as possible. It was agreed that further research was required, with costings, and that residents should be consulted on how they would wish to use a residents' card. Councillor A Kitcat agreed to meet to offer further thoughts and comments.

12. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO CABINET, CABINET MEMBER MEETING OR COUNCIL

12.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6.20pm.

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of