

Economic Regeneration, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Tuesday 7 June 2016

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Daryl Brown, Adam Connell and Alan De'Ath (Chair)

Cabinet Members: Councillors Ben Coleman, Sue Fennimore and Andrew Jones

Officers: Donna Pentelow

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillor Harry Phibbs. Following the meeting Councillor Lucy Ivimy sent her apologies for having missed the meeting because of an urgent personal matter.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Fennimore and Connell declared that they were members of the trustee board of the Lyric Theatre.

3. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor Ivimy was elected as Vice-Chair of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2016-17. The vote was unanimous.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed to be accurate.

5. "THE CONNECTED BOROUGH: DESTINATION, CREATION AND INCLUSION" - AN ARTS STRATEGY FOR HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM 2016-2022

Donna Pentelow explained that she was pleased to be discussing the new Arts Strategy on the second day of the H&F Arts Fest. She explained that the new strategy was the result of an extensive consultation which had created a lot of enthusiasm. Over 130 organisations had been invited to participate, a dedicated arts email address had been set up to receive responses, which would continue to be used by the council, whilst workshops had been held on a the strategy's key themes. She was grateful to all those who had participated.

Ms Pentelow said that the strategy's vision was for Hammersmith and Fulham to become:

- One of the country's most popular destinations for people to participate in and enjoy the arts.
- A place in which greater creativity and innovation thrive and the arts are experienced by more people from a wider range of backgrounds.
- A place where local residents and cultural organisations drive more clearly how the council supports the art, ensuring that every penny of arts funding is even more focused than now.
- A place where the arts are at the centre of a dynamic local economy, leading to new jobs, businesses and economic growth.

She then explained that the strategy had three core themes: Destination – Boosting the local economy by developing and promoting a thriving borough for the arts, Creation – Supporting people to create and produce excellent art of all kinds and Inclusion – Giving residents from a wide range of backgrounds more opportunity to experience and participate in artistic activity.

An action plan had been developed to deliver the strategy's vision; this plan included a large number of activities and had been prioritised. The key actions for the first year would be to create an arts network, to seek funding for an arts development officer and to work on setting up an Arts and Culture Trust, which could administer an Arts Endowment Fund. Donna Pentelow explained that there would also be more work to extend the offer of libraries to include more arts and culture.

Donna Pentelow explained that the administration was committed to displaying the Cecil French Bequest, and that two of the paintings were soon to go out on loan with an exhibition tour across Europe; the paintings would eventually be displayed in London as part of that exhibition. In addition the Council had acquired high quality prints of the works which would be displayed at Hammersmith Town Hall.

The Chair said that he was pleased to see that the comments made at the PAC meeting in September 2015 had been reflected in the consultation process and in the new strategy. He noted that the prints had been a suggestion of a resident and felt that their being created and displayed showed that the Council really valued the opinions of residents.

Members of the public said that they felt the strategy was a good one which reflected the aspirations they held for the arts in the borough; it was agreed that the strategy was very much better than the first draft and that the consultation had led to significant improvements. The following points were made about the strategy:

- The inclusion strand needed to focus on accessibility for all, noting the importance of other cultures, and of younger, older and disabled people. It was felt that it might be worth targetting specific groups to ensure that the strategy's aims were achieved, but that such an approach needed to be balanced.
- The strategy needed to reference the important relationship between the arts and sustainability.
- The strategy did not specifically list maintaining and improving existing infrastructure for arts as an aim.
- The strategy needed to include more detail on marketing the arts both within the borough and to tourists.

Members of the public and councillors suggested the following ideas:

- A community champions scheme could be used to draw communities and young people into the arts.
- Rent reductions could be offered to groups in return for their widening participation in the arts.
- Empty shops could be used as galleries, and businesses could be encouraged to display art.
- All involved needed to think creatively about how they could help others and indeed be helped. It was noted that whilst funds were tight there was lots of practical assistance that organisations could offer.
- S.106 money from developers could be used to support the arts.
- The network that H&F Arts Fest has could be the starting point for the proposed Arts Network.
- The Hammersmith BID could be invited to suggest what it could do to help promote the arts.
- People from the arts community could help the council to seek funding for the arts development officer.

Councillor Coleman said that he was pleased that members of the public were so enthusiastic about the arts. He felt that setting up the arts network was a very important step and that it should be done before the summer holidays. Councillor Jones agreed and said that the council would ensure that a reasonable and adequate level of officer support would be provided to start the network. The council would also draw up options for funding an arts officer which the network could then help with.

A member of the public explained that there was a good exhibition on local artists in the Local History room at the Hammersmith Library which she felt ought to be preserved in some way.

6. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING AND WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on 5 July 2016 in the Courtyard Room, commencing at 7pm. Members also noted the committee's work programme for future meetings. A resident said that they felt it important that the committee discuss the council's archives as well as libraries at its next meeting.

Meeting started: 7.08 pm
Meeting ended: 8.40 pm

Chair

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