

The Economy, Housing and the Arts Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Tuesday 4 December 2018

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Rory Vaughan (Chair), Zarar Qayyum, Rowan Ree, Ann Rosenberg and Adronie Alford

Officers: Joanne Woodward (Chief Planning and Economic Development Officer), Thomas Dodd (Arts Development Officer)

Others: Hanna Whiteman (Studio Hanche), Nora Laraki (Hammersmith United Charities), Rosie Whitney-Fish - Dance West, Nicola Price - Fulham Palace Org, Petrea Owens – Chair of the HF Arts Fest, Flora Herberich – HF Arts Fest Producer.

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were provided by Councillors Lisa Homan and Andrew Jones and Sylvain Malburet from Bush Theatre.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

24. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2018 were agreed as an accurate record subject to the amendment that Councillor Lisa Homan had submitted her apologies and was not present at the meeting.

25. ARTS COMMISSION 2018/2019

Joanne Woodward, Chief Planning Officer and Economic Development Officer, Growth and Place, introduced the report which explained that it was the Council's intention to establish an independent Arts Commission in 2019. The aim of the Commission was to maximise the Boroughs' collective arts and cultural strengths to deliver economic prosperity to the Borough.

Providing context, Joanne Woodward explained that The Commission would build on the vision outlined in the Council's Art Strategy, *The Connected Borough* (2016), refreshing the strategy and making practical steps to ensure that its goals were achieved under its three core themes of: Destination, Creation and Inclusion.

The report provided details on the activities of the Commission's steering team. It was noted, that to date, the steering team had assembled a Committee Panel which comprised of representatives from the borough's cultural institutions, local practitioners and expert witnesses from inside and outside the borough. The Committee were informed that this would be led by Jonathan Church (Independent, Director) and comprise of four other members.

Joanne Woodward explained the intention of the Commission was to meet for approximately six sessions and explore a number of themes which were likely to include:

1. Scope of vision and visioning session.
2. Destination - Infrastructure, Financial investment and sustainability.
 - a) Infrastructure - what do we have to do to make this work?
 - b) Financial investment - subsidy being replaced with sponsorship and commercial investment.
3. Sustainability, audience inclusion and investment, cross fertilisation of expertise and knowledge.
4. Creation - Anchor Institutions and Arts Trust
Who are the key players? How do we strengthen partnerships? What will the Arts trust look like, why establish one and what outcomes do we want to achieve?
5. Inclusion - ArtsFest, Irish Cultural Centre, Offenders Theatre Company, all other community arts organisations.
6. Encapsulation - A final session to run through research undertaken and outline the way forward.

The Committee was provided with details of the draft timetable for the Commission. The Commission would determine its own programme scope and timetable. It was anticipated that the Commission would be delivered in three distinct phases. Phase 1, taking place throughout December 2018 sought to establish the Arts & Culture Commission, agree Panel Members and expert witnesses and also the Terms of Reference. Phase 2, January to the summer of 2019 would entail the holding of Arts and Culture Panel sessions, meetings and consultations. Finally, Phase 3 would see the publication of the Commission's report in September 2019. The Committee

were informed that the Commission was expected to report to meet the following objectives:

- Investigate how arts and culture can be harnessed to deliver tangible economic benefits to the borough by making our town centres destinations of choice, raising the borough's profile.
- Developing a strategy as to how arts and culture can be best used to attract and retain businesses and skilled employees.
- Harness the arts within our developing science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) sectors to integrate the borough's creators into multi-disciplinary fields (STEAM).
- Explore how planning, licensing, enforcement and other public policies can support the creative economy and town centre growth in Hammersmith & Fulham.

Concluding her initial remarks, Joanne Woodward underlined the Arts Commission was still at a very early, formative stage, and she reassured the Committee, that there would be plenty of opportunity for residents and Arts groups to provide their views and feed into the work of the Commission .It was noted that the first meeting of the Commission would take place in January 2019 and the Committee were encouraged to provide feedback and any suggestions it might have, so these could be considered prior to the initial meeting.

Councillor Zarar Qayyum noted the Commission's intention to publish its report in September 2019 and asked if officers had contacted the business community, as the development of the Arts and economic development were inter-related. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that overtures were currently being made and further work would take place in the New Year. Councillor Zarar Qayyum asked if there would be representation from the local business community on the Commission. In response, Joanne Woodward explained that the Commission is expected to draw on an Expert Panel of Witnesses which would include representatives from a wide cross section of the community including the business community.

A number of representatives from Arts groups attended the meeting and the Chair invited them to ask questions and participate in the meeting.

Petrea Owens, Chair of the HF Arts Fest, commented that the composition of the Arts Commission was too narrow and was not broad enough to adequately represent the views of the community. Councillor Zarar Qayyum concurred with this view. Petrea Owens asked who had made the decision about the composition of the Committee panel. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that, as far as she was aware, the panel had been selected by the Cabinet Member for the Arts and Economic Regeneration in conjunction with the Director for Growth and Place. Other decision makers might have been involved but she needed to check who had been involved in the selection process.

Action: Joanne Woodward to check and confirm which decision takers had appointed the Arts Commission, Committee panel.

Commenting on the officer report, Councillor Adronie Alford stated that this was far too brief and did not contain sufficient material information about the Committee panel, given its important role in steering the work of the Commission. She noted that details such as the Panels' CV's, areas of expertise and interests (within specific fields of the Arts) were unknown. Councillor Adronie Alford also asked for details to be provided about the selection process of the Committee panel and how rigorous this had been.

Action: That Joanne Woodward provide further information about the Arts Commission membership: including the backgrounds of the Committee panel members and the selection process.

Commenting on the discussions to this point, the Chair confirmed it was important the PAC Committee provided its views on a number of issues, including: the balance and composition of the Commission, the types of expert witnesses the panel would be inviting, as well as the thematic approach (already outlined).

Councillor Ann Rosenberg noted that the composition of the Committee panel was weighted in favour of the visual and performing arts and no music representative had been included. Speaking from her own personal experience, she commented it was important there were sufficient performing arts venues and consideration was given to where these were located. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that as part of the Art Commission's work, a borough wide audit of performance venues would be undertaken. Asking a supplementary question, Councillor Ann Rosenberg noted that there did not appear to be any performance spaces for small, intimate events and suggested this was something that needed to be considered. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that session two, of the six designated sessions, would look at infrastructure and service provision, as well as, those actions which needed to be undertaken to attract patrons to specific venues.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg referred to the annual Hi-Fi Show which was held in the Novotel hotel in Hammersmith and the importance of linking live music and business together. She explained that she was aware there had been difficulties which had prohibited advertisements being erected at street level to publicise the event and commented that more had to be done in the future to maximise these opportunities.

A resident in attendance, highlighted it was vital the Arts Commission incorporated the findings of the recent Older People's and Disability commissions, to ensure that existing research and feedback was used to inform the work of the Arts Commission. Flora Herberich, HF Arts Fest Producer, commented on the structure of the Commission and noted that the only business representation came from Westfield. The Committee agreed that the role and contribution of small independent businesses needed to be recognised. Asking a supplementary question, she noted the timetable suggested a report would be published in nine-months time and asked what

the outcomes of the report would be and what the ultimate goals of the Arts Commission were.

Hanna Whiteman, Studio Hanche, provided details of her work with children and residents in the borough. She asked what steps the Arts Commission was taking to ensure it was as inclusive, befitted the wider community (in relation to outreach work) and targeted as many people as possible.

Councillor Rowan Ree highlighted that young people had not been included in the six sessions and it was essential that Schools and youth groups were integral to the work of the Commission.

Action: The PAC Committee agreed that the evidence gathering sessions of the Arts Commission needed to include young people and harness their enthusiasm.

In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that one of the sessions, would specifically cover inclusion, as well as the ways and means to improve this.

Developing the theme of the consultation process further, Petrea Owens, championed the work already being done by Arts Fest, including its efforts to ensure its work was as inclusive as possible. She reiterated a number of the previous remarks and asked who had chosen the structure of the evidence gathering sessions, as well as what criteria would be applied to the evidence which had been gathered. In response, Joanne Woodward assured the Committee and those present, that the Commission was intended to be an open and independent process and there was no intention to exclude any groups from contributing to the process.

Councillor Rowan Ree asked what type of support the Council would be providing to the Commission. In response, Joanne Woodward, confirmed that the Commission would receive similar support to the Council's previous Commissions. This would include Corporate Communications to highlight the evidence gathering sessions and advise residents and businesses how they could participate directly or submit their views. In addition, it was noted that Thomas Dodd, Arts Development officer, would play an active role in supporting the work of the Commission. The intention was for the first evidence gathering session to be held in the Town Hall, but moving forwards, it was likely that it might hold sessions at other venues throughout the Borough to increase access to participants. Councillor Ann Rosenberg asked how the venues allocations policy worked. In response, Thomas Dodd explained that at present, the allocations worked on an ad hoc basis and aspiration was that the work of the Commission would take a strategic view and pull a variety of options together. He confirmed that venues, venue hire and the Council's allocations policy are expected to be covered as part of the Arts Commission Work.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg noted that Sands End would have a Community Centre soon, which incorporated an arts room and enquired whether it was the Council's intention to use existing (and new) resources in innovative ways to help arts and culture flourish in the borough in the future. Petrea Owens

provided details about how many meeting Arts Fest held per year, its role in matching artists with venues, as well as its outreach activities. The Chair asked what the best methods were to ensure that communication across the Borough was taking place about the work of the Arts Commission. In response, Petrea Owens explained that had Arts Fest know about the Commission sooner, it could have played an active role in advertising it. The Chair agreed that it was essential the Arts Commission was brought to the attention of as wider demographic as possible and Arts Fest should be used as one of a number of means for doing this.

Action: That HF Arts Fest be used as an active partner to aid the work of the Arts Commission.

Hanna Whiteman, Studio Hanche, highlighted the number of derelict buildings in Goldhawk Road, as well as the community halls on the estates and the opportunities these presented to house arts activities. She explained how her dance group had been in contact with an organisation called “New Think” (which allowed for the temporary use of buildings) so that music, exhibitions and workshops could be staged. Petrea Owens mentioned that the Riverside building which had been used during the 2018 Arts Fest over 9 days, had accommodated over 100 artists. Given the suggestions the Committee had heard, the Chair stated that it was important these ideas were not lost. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that the it was still very early days and the Council had not yet started its engagement phase, which was timetabled to begin after Christmas. Joanne Woodward confirmed that the Council had an arts database, would use an active press campaign, as well as a variety of social media platforms to engage and invite various groups to the witness and evidence gathering sessions. There was also the expectation the Arts Commission would request that the Council wrote to specific people and organisations on its behalf.

Councillor Ann Rosenberg noted that Phase 1 was due to be completed by the end of December 2018 and asked if this needed to be extended. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that the engagement would take place throughout the duration of the Arts Commission.

The Committee agreed that moving forwards, it was important the Arts Commission embraced diversity, different cultures and accessibility. Thomas Dodd highlighted that an aspect of the Commission’s role was to revisit the Council’s intention to form an Arts Trust. However, while it was important the Commission captured previous conversations, the Chair said that it was important it did not plough over old ground.

Commenting on the envisaged timetable for the Arts Commission, Councillor Adronie Alford stated that she thought it was not realistic the scoping could be completed before the end of December 2018. Councillor Adronie Alford reiterated that she thought the Commission’s panels were too small, its remit too narrow and highlighted that its work programme only covered the performing arts. She stated it was important the Arts Commission recognised Arts were for everybody.

Councillor Adrione Alford asked if Councillors would be provided with a list of persons to involve with the Arts Commission and stated that officers needed to ensure they drew on the valuable insight and knowledge that local ward councillors could provide. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that communication lists would include Councillors and the networks within their own wards. Officers recognised that it was important the Arts Commission involved as many groups as possible.

Developing the theme of communications further, Petrea Owens appreciated that it was impossible for the Council to meet with all interested parties and suggested that the Council could work in partnership with Arts Fest. If this approach was agreed then stronger communications between both organisations were required.

Councillor Zarar Qayyum asked that officers would ensure the Arts Commission's recommendations dovetailed with the economic growth strategy.

Petrea Owens asked whether the Arts Commission had a terms of reference to refer to. In response, Joanne Woodward confirmed that this was being developed at present and would inform the future sessions in the new year.

Summing up, the Chair said that the role of the PAC Committee had been to establish what the plan of action was and to comment on this and to determine if this was the right plan and engaging the right groups.

Thanking the witnesses who had attended the meeting, the Chair confirmed that a number of important themes had emerged. These were:

Engagement – It was important the Council worked with HF Arts Fest and others to establish a database of arts partners and organisations throughout the Borough, as well as ensure the Arts Commission was as inclusive as possible.

The Membership of the Commission – The Committee noted its small size and felt there was scope for further members to be added to make it more rounded and diverse.

The Broader Community – Discussions were needed to ensure residents were engaged and it was sufficiently diverse.

Big Business (Westfield were already on the Commission) – The role of small businesses should not be overlooked.

Young People – The Committee stated that it was essential young people were actively involved.

The Arts Commission and partnership working with the Council – The Committee hoped the Arts Commission would work in partnership the Council, businesses and dovetail with the Council's economic objectives.

The Arts Offer – The Committee agreed this was especially important as it drew people into the borough.

Communications and links with other people – The Committee agreed it was important that a contact point for expert witnesses was established early on to enable the Commission to invite expert witnesses.

The Chair concluded the item by thanking the arts representatives and residents who had attended the meeting and commented that he, and the Committee looked forward to seeing the work of the Arts Commission in 2019.

WORK PROGRAMMING 2018/19

The Chair introduced the item. Ideas for future meetings included the Council's Fire Safety Plus programme and broadband rollout in the borough. Committee Members were encouraged to contact the Chair with any potential topics they might have.

Meeting started: 7:00 pm
Meeting ended: 8:20 pm

Chairman

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