

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer to be circulated the meeting. The Councillor asking the question may then ask one relevant supplementary question which shall be put and answered without discussion.

**(a) Councillor Davis**

“We welcome the new document on the city’s Cultural Strategy presented at this committee. But, would like to ask what steps the Cabinet Member is taking now to ensure that the N1 11 ie. the participation in the arts indicator will reach its target in 2010?”

**Response from Councillor Smith, Cabinet Member for Culture Recreation & Tourism.**

“The data from the Active People survey demonstrates and celebrates our current success in enabling our residents to actively participate in the arts. Brighton & Hove has the highest level of participation outside London and the highest in the south east region and of all the other local authorities that have selected NI 11.

Currently participation stands at 61.2 % and our target is 64 .2% by October 2010.

Our strategy is to recognise and build on our current success. It is a clear indication that our current approach is a good one.

The partnership working between the council and arts and cultural organisations of all sizes in the city is central in delivering the vibrant calendar of cultural events that our residents and visitors enjoy and will continue to be at the heart of the city council’s plans to increase participation in the arts to 2010 and beyond.

**The regional and national picture**

We are sharing good practice and knowledge around NI 11 with Arts Council England and the 3 other local authorities in the region that have selected NI 11 (Wokingham, Kent and Milton Keynes) through regular planning meetings. We have also participated in a national conference about NI 11.

**The local picture**

We are consolidating data from local and regional sources about the current opportunities for participation in the arts in the city, who delivers them, who participates and attends and who doesn’t.

We will then share this with our local cultural delivery partners and work with them to establish how we can reach those who are not currently participating.

To this end we are organising an NI 11 meeting working with the audience development agency Audiences South in Brighton for the 3 July. This meeting has been funded by ACE

The meeting will have 3 main aims:

1. To introduce the cultural delivery partners to the detail of NI 11 including an introduction to the LAA and to the Active People survey
2. To share the ACE produced Propensity to Engage which shows where in the city the pockets of highest and lowest engagement in the arts are.
3. To ascertain what information on their audiences they already hold, identify gaps in participation and to share good practice in audience development.

Alongside this we are making the most of the opportunity of the Festivals Clusters pilot to invest in our festivals recognising that they play a key role in developing participation in the arts particularly at those traditionally non-engaged. An initial audit of the city found there to be 60 annual cultural festivals.

### **Building on current good practice**

We have been focusing our existing investment, support and initiatives more tightly around NI 11 under our 'priority of 'providing excellent cultural opportunities for all'

ACE have identified 3 main types of event and activities that have the greatest potential to increase participation in the arts:

- Flagship outdoor events including initiatives in unexpected places
- Participatory projects with local people culminating in a community event
- Arts activities that people experience as part of everyday life

These are 3 areas in which the city's cultural sector already excel and which the city council will continue to prioritise through our annual and 3 year grant funding and through the Festival Clusters initiative which takes us through to 2010.

### **Flagship events**

The city council and Arts Commission led White Night has participation at its heart and will continue to develop new partnerships in order to provide accessible arts activities in unexpected places and which people will experience as part of everyday life. New plans for 2009 include a programme of work with Sports Development and with Adult Learning Group with a focus on participatory cultural activity.

Our aim is for White Night to reach 20,000 people this year.

### **In Summary**

In summary, our action plan is:

- To raise awareness of the requirements of NI 11 amongst our cultural delivery partners; to celebrate our success and develop a shared action plan

- To collate and share a picture of our current cultural offer and who is and is not participating
- To prioritise NI 11 outcomes through our grants programmes and through our strategic initiatives (such as Festival Clusters) and strategic events (such as White Night) and projects (such as participatory public art projects)
- To work with colleagues in other directorates to help embed NI 11 outcomes in projects and initiatives that are not arts initiated (for example input into Streets for People day, Adult Learning and Sports development)

To develop performance indicators and monitoring and evaluation for this investment that will help demonstrate NI 11 outcomes and provide additional context for the Active People survey.”

**(b) Councillor Kitcat**

“Can Cllr [Fallon-Khan] explain why the Regency Square war memorial continues to be in a state of disrepair nearly 8 months after residents, veterans and ward councillors first reported problems and what action is he taking to restore it?”

**Response from Councillor Fallon-Khan, Cabinet Member for Central Services.**

“In early 2008 at the request of ex Service Associations, T.E.Tilley, the local stonemasons who maintain all the council war memorials were instructed to scaffold out The Royal Sussex Regiment Boer War Memorial at the bottom of Regency Square and undertake a minor refurbishment to include replacement of a number of missing letters, cleaning down of the stonework and treating the metalwork including redecoration of any previously decorated surfaces. Tilley's have maintained this memorial for many years and advised that the metalwork had previously been painted. A specification was consequently agreed with the paint manufacturers and applied to the metal surfaces during the refurbishment.

The works were completed in May 2008. In November it became evident that the repainted surfaces were fading badly, with patchy discoloration although the paint film itself did not appear to be de-bonding. Once this was discovered, Tilley's were recalled to the site and since that time investigations have been undertaken between themselves and the paint manufacturer to establish the cause of the discoloration and identify a remedial procedure. Initial advice from the paint manufacturer in January 09 was to let the new coatings weather in so that the extent of the problem could be established. Since February the Council has had discussions with the Conservation Officer of the War Memorials Trust, Joanna Sanderson and Tilley's to agree the way forward.

Unfortunately we have been unable to establish the cause of the failure but all parties now accept that the new paint film clearly was not suitable. Tilley's have accepted **responsibility** for **resolving** the problem and remedial works will be carried out at no cost to the council.

Tilleys are currently on site cleaning the lower parts to see if the discolouration on the paint can be removed. The discolouration may have been caused by a reaction of the metal to the previous paint or between the paint surface and the atmosphere. It is a matter of testing out solutions on trial areas to see the specific results. If this test area proves that the discolouration can be successfully removed and over time remain as such, the advice is that if the discolouration does not return after a few months this may be considered the reasonable solution for the memorial.

However, if this is not the case we would look to remove the paint and see what condition the base bronze underneath is in. On this basis initial instructions have been issued to re-erect the scaffold around the structure so that the paint can be removed from a section of the monument to establish the surface condition of the underlying metal. Based on this investigation a joint group including the council's conservation officer, the War Memorials Trust, Tilleys and Property & Design will meet on site to agree the remedial work specification and the contractor will be instructed accordingly. This meeting will also aim to establish an effective conservation regime for the future.

Property & Design have corresponded with ward councillors and with the Royal Sussex Regimental Association to keep them updated with progress and to reassure them that the necessary action will be taken to rectify this problem. We are fully aware of the sensitive nature, and importance, of the memorial and hope to have an effective solution and way forward within the next few months and anticipate completion of the remedial works this Summer."

**(c) Councillor Davis**

"There is growing concern among parents of young children in my ward of Goldsmid at the shortage of local primary school places. Many parents have been told that they must send their children to schools a considerable distance from their homes, in some cases as much as four miles away. This is unacceptable for many young families.

Please would Cllr Vanessa Brown inform me how many children living in Goldsmid Ward have not been allocated places at primary schools in the recent admissions round that are within a walk of one mile from their homes, as encouraged by Brighton & Hove Council's own policy?"

**Response from Councillor Brown, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People.**

"The Council is investigating options to increase the number of primary school places in Hove and parts of Brighton in response to an unprecedented increase in the number of school age children. This increase is particularly evident in Hove, and Councillor Davis will be aware of the moves already made to permanently increase the size of the Davigdor and Somerhill schools, and the provision of additional places at West Blatchington Primary School.

Of the 136 children in the Goldsmid Ward allocated a Reception place for September, 91 will be attending a school less than a mile from their home.

There are 32 children who will be going to a school between 1 and 2 miles from their home, 15 by choice (10 first preferences, 2 second and 3 third) and 17 directed.

12 children were offered a school further than 2 miles but less than 3 miles, 10 were directed and 2 were by choice (one first preference and one third preference) One child was directed to a school over three miles from home.

Further options of both new build and the extension of existing schools are under evaluation, with the aim of providing two additional forms of entry in Hove beyond the permanent additional places already proposed.”

