

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CULTURE, TOURISM & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.00PM 2 JULY 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: Randall (Chairman) ; Allen, Davis, Drake (Deputy Chairman), Harmer-Strange, Hawkes, Kennedy and Older.

Co-opted Members:

PART ONE

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1a Substitutes

1.1 Councillor Averil Older for Councillor Carol Theobald and Councillor Kevin Allen for Councillor Craig Turton.

1b Declaration of Interests

1.2 There were none.

1c Exclusion of press and public

1.3 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 member of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in section 1001 (1) of the said Act.

1.4 **RESOLVED** – *that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the discussion of Item 14 under Category 3.*

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 RESOLVED – *that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 April 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman.*

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular Andrew Comben, Chief Executive of Brighton Dome and Festival. The Chairman told the Committee about an excellent meeting he had with SeaRoc to discuss environmental industries. SeaRoc were a local company who had started from scratch and now employed 70 people. They discussed the proposed wind array and the third round of seabeds lettings by the Crown Estate which would provide a huge opportunity for Brighton & Hove.

3.2 The Chairman had attended a number of excellent events during the Brighton Festival, attended the launch of the Brighton Marathon, and met with Julian Boast, Chief Executive of the Theatre Royal. He also commented on the excellence of the Open Houses, particularly the curated ones.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4.1 There were none.

5. QUESTIONS AND LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

5. There were none.

6. DOME AND FESTIVAL PRESENTATION

6.1 Mr Comben thanked the Committee for the invitation to talk to them and outlined the three areas he would be covering, namely: the festival; reflections on the first year in post including an overview of the key points of the festival; and the new corporate strategy that would be launched on 9 July 2009.

6.2 Brighton had confirmed Mr Comben's first impressions as a very creative and collaborative city with large numbers of artists who lived here. This had formed the backdrop to the development of the strategy going forward. Mr Comben struck a note of caution by remarking in many areas, the Dome and Festival Company was not where it should be, nor where it thinks it is. As other areas realised how much culture contributed to a city, Brighton & Hove would have to stay ahead of the game to attract people to the city.

6.3 The introduction of a guest Artistic Director, Anish Kapoor, had created a central point of coherence for the festival this year. His international stature had attracted more people, and more media: the media profile of the festival was up 40% on the previous year. 80,000 people came to see Anish Kapoor installations (6 works over 3 weeks); 13,000 went to the Chattri to see the C-Curve. Traditionally two thirds of bookers came from BN postcodes, which was a mark of loyalty. This year was two thirds again but 55% brought others with them from outside the city. On average, 4-6 tickets were bought: residents saw the festival as a time to show off their city. A small survey showed that 11% of tickets were bought from London but this rose to 22% for the Anish Kapoor events. The challenge was to transfer this visiting audience to a paid audience. It was a wonderful, positive festival, both artistically and financially, for the city and a signpost of where we want to be.

6.4 The Open Houses, particularly the curated ones, were very strong this year and fed into the visual arts in the festival. The Fringe, Great Escape, Open Houses, and the Festival all had strong correlations.

6.5 The attendance figures for the festival were up 60,000 on last year; a total of 210,00. 150,000 attended the free events. 29% of those who attended the smoke and mirrors event at Queen's Park had never been to a festival event before. 46% came from a BN2 postcode. This audience could be encouraged to attend year-round events.

6.6 Mr Comben outlined the corporate strategy which had been developed, in consultation with others, over the last 9 months. The strapline was "inspiring creativity and enriching lives" and aimed to "enrich and change lives and inspire artists to be their most creative". The four core priorities were: to grow the organisation as a year round artistic centre; to enhance learning and access; a wider invitation to regional artists; and to embrace the Cultural Olympiad.

6.7 Mr Comben planned to open up the Dome as much as possible, encouraging people to come in which would increase connections with the local community and extend creative opportunities to them. Mr Comben had six nationally significant companies he wanted to create associations with, for example, the Hofesh Shechter dance company were the resident company until 2011.

6.8 The Chairman thanked Mr Comben for his interesting presentation and Members asked questions. All Members congratulated Mr Comben and his team on an excellent and very successful festival. In response to a question about web-based ticketing and marketing, Mr Comben replied that improvement was needed. The website had been getting better and better but there had been some problems resulting from an upgrade by the box office operator. Mr Comben told the Committee that he would like a guest Artistic Director each year who, like Anish Kapoor, would help to create connections throughout the programme. This would not necessarily be an expert from the visual arts but from another artistic medium.

6.9 Following a question on age profiling, Mr Comben replied that they did not have age specific data but he was happy to investigate this further. They sought to cater for all ranges both in performance and participation. They ran an education programme with a number of events during the year, including the children's parade and 'adopt an author'. Part of the new corporate strategy was to engage as much as possible with young people. Councillors commented on the success of the enhanced access to the Dome: Mr Comben remarked this had been an incredibly positive experience. In response to a question on postcode data, the reply was that the data was still being analysed. They were looking at taking events close to different parts of the city as this encouraged participation and people were more likely to attend additional events.

6.10 A question was asked about Anish Kapoor's perception of the festival: after an initial reticence, by the end of the festival, he was saying it was one of the best things he had done recently. Working to a budget was challenging and rewarding and he had enjoyed the opportunity to engage with the city and bring acquaintances here.

6.11 The Chairman thanked Mr Comben for attending the meeting – and for a fantastic festival.

7. THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS OF THE COUNCIL'S GOLF COURSES AT HOLLINGBURY AND WATERHALL

7.1 The Head of Sport and Leisure, Ian Shurrock, introduced the report and thanked the Committee for including it on the agenda. This formed part of the consultation process on the proposed option for the future of the golf courses, that is, the appointment of an external operator to run both courses in order to secure their long term future as public golf courses. Historically, the courses had fragmented management with the club houses and catering managed by the golf clubs, the council's greenkeepers maintained the courses, a golf professional at Hollingbury and council employed golf assistants at Waterhall. Other councils had benefited from one integrated management approach with a single operator which had improved the quality of the golf service provided. A report would go to the Cabinet Member Meeting (CMM) on the process of tendering but the approval for any contract would be required by Cabinet. The income from the courses had fluctuated and declined over the years and an external operator was considered the best option to secure the future of both golf courses by improving the quality of service and providing investment in the courses.

7.2 A question was asked about the number of people using the courses, and more assurance was requested regarding the position on those living on the courses at the moment. Mr Shurrock replied that the people who lived on the course were not Council employees but linked to the clubs. Legal Services were looking into this and more detail would be available by the time of the Cabinet Member Meeting. Concerning consultation, there had been one staff meeting and another one had been requested for after the CMM. Staff would have conditions of employment protected under T.U.P.E. regulations if they transferred to an external operator. The income from both courses was £415,000 in 2005/6 and £356,000 in 2007/8, which represented an overall operating loss. Mr Shurrock was asked to elaborate on what had led to this decline and explained that the key issue was fragmentation. For example, at other courses, groups who wanted to play golf had one point of contact and an overall quality golf experience could be achieved.

7.3 In response to a question, the Committee was informed that the third sector had taken on the management of a number of sports centres elsewhere in the form of leisure trusts. It was possible they could be involved in this area but only one example was known of a leisure trust currently operating golf courses (Bromley Mytime Leisure Trust operates two golf courses in Kent).

7.4 The Committee discussed the complexity of the issue and wondered if more attention to detail was needed in some areas (such as staffing) before a decision was taken. Mr Shurrock explained that the soft market testing had been structured to discuss matters with other operators and consultation had taken place with other local authorities. The various agreements in place with these two golf clubs had come to an end and therefore new management arrangements were required. The opportunity was now available for an integrated management approach for all aspects of the golf service. Members asked whether there was a business case available or any additional financial information. In response, the Committee were told that there was further financial information but if it had been supplied to the Committee it would be in Part 2. A balance needed to be struck between supplying information and discussions in public. By going out to the market to seek an external operator would determine the financial viability of a business case.

7.5 Concerning marketing and attracting young people and women to play golf, the Sports Development Team had done some good work in this area. As these are public courses, any external operator would be required to provide a golf development programme. Members were concerned that an external operator would seek to raise prices, however, the prices for using the golf courses would be set by the Council. Mr Shurrock emphasised that any agreement with an external operator would take the form of a partnership similar to the arrangement that currently exists between the council and DC Leisure Management for many of the council's sports facilities. The courses would operate on the basis as public golf courses. There was considered to be potential to improve the marketing of the courses and the specialist expertise of an external golf operator would provide a particular benefit in this area.

7.6 The Chairman noted that Members of the Committee had expressed some disquiet about the report, and felt that further information would have been helpful. As the committee were being consulted on the report Mr Shurrock was asked to raise the issues highlighted by the committee at the Cabinet Member Meeting.

7.7 RESOLVED – *that the comments of the Committee were raised at the forthcoming Cabinet Member Meeting.*

8. CULTURAL STRATEGY

8.1 The Head of Culture & Economy, Paula Murray, introduced the report. This was the final version of the report which was agreed by Cabinet last month. Following the Scrutiny Workshop in March on the draft report, three changes were made. The first was the importance of more consultation and involvement of external partners. This had started as a discussion on 'name-checking' and had broadened into a change of process. Consequently, the report would be on the website for consultation for 12 months and partners would be asked to provide case studies to add to the report. The second change was increased emphasis for 2012 which had been done. The third point was about access and the importance of access. The report has focussed on the areas where there was a need for 'stretch'. In the next few weeks images would be added to the report and it would be redesigned.

8.2 Following a question on the timescales, Ms Murray confirmed that the report would be finalised within the next 12 months and she was happy to bring the final report back to the committee at that time. The process of consultation was a full one that would include those who did not have access to the web version.

8.3 RESOLVED – *the Committee welcomed the report and requested that the final report be brought to the Committee at the end of the 12 months consultation period.*

9. MUSEUMS PLAN - SIGN OFF

9.1 The Head of Royal Pavilion & Museums, Janita Bagshawe, introduced the report which had been to the Cabinet Member Meeting and then to Cabinet on 11 June 2009. The Plan was required as part of the accreditation standard and was fundamental for securing funding. The strategic aims set out in the report were: to develop audiences; to care for and sustain our collections and buildings; to transform the ways we work; and maximise income to develop a

sustainable service. At the time the Museums Plan was written, the Renaissance Funding was unknown; it had been successfully secured for 2009-11; although its future post April 2011 was subject to a review and a report on the Renaissance Funding would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

9.2 Following a question on repeat visits to the Pavilion, Ms Bagshawe guessed this may be around 14%. They were currently working on the events programme, especially for the off-peak session to increase usage. The Renaissance Funding would be used to tell the tale of the Pavilion when it was a hospital. A question was asked about Preston Manor and why it was not used as a wedding venue with the viewpoint expressed that it was under-exploited. Ms Bagshawe explained that Preston Manor was too small inside to be a wedding venue although there had been one or two marquees outside; funding from Renaissance however was being used to do new interpretation at Preston Manor. New ticketing systems including web-based package systems were being introduced, to sell packages that will bring visitors from the Pavilion to Preston Manor.

9.3 Concerning the Booth Museum, a question was asked about the state of the museum and when the options appraisal would be undertaken. In response, Ms Bagshawe told the Committee that the Renaissance Funding was allocated for a natural history collections review in 2010-11; the brief for this had not yet been drawn up. They would be looking at natural collections, including the access problems for the mezzanine level at the Booth Museum. The comment was made that the footfall to these two small museums was a problem: how did you get people out of the city centre to visit them? It was noted that Preston Manor had been used by the Mayor before and the use of a tearoom in this way could be further explored.

9.4 The Forward plan advised that the Pavilion's visitor facilities required updating; there was no storage area for bags etc. Ms Bagshawe agreed that this was an area that needed to be looked at and they were considering re-configuring to provide a temporary place for pushchairs. Providing these facilities in the Pavilion was not straightforward unlike similar places which have outhouses that can be used for visitor facilities. Funding would also have to be secured for facilities. Following a question on the effects of the recession, the full picture was not yet known although corporate hospitality had declined.

9.5 **RESOLVED** – *the committee resolved to receive an update report on the museums plan at a future meeting, including information on the Renaissance Funding.*

10. POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE RECESSION ON BUSINESS

10.1 The Head of Culture & Economy, Paula Murray, introduced the report that had been referred from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. The impact of the recession on Brighton & Hove had not been quite as bad as the impact on the rest of the South East. This may leave the city in a better position to come out of the recession and was also a useful tool to restore consumer confidence. Ms Murray explained that initially the measures that were taken were reactive ones. Part two of the campaign 'Be Local, Buy Local' was about to be launched with *The Argus* and would focus on consumers, for example, offering loyalty cards and vouchers. The Greeter Scheme was one that required only small scale funding but would help to boost the economy. The scheme to create art in vacated places was also only a small amount of funding but would have a wide effect. These schemes were about attracting people into the

city and encouraging them to spend. The HSBC 'Super Cities' report which identified Brighton & Hove as one of the economies of the future was a significant and useful report.

10.2 It was remarked that there were some interesting ideas and the Head of Tourism and Venues, Adam Bates, was congratulated on his recent media appearances to generate positive publicity. The issue was raised of tenants receiving better deals from landlords to help in the recession but not from the Council, with the specific example cited of the rises in rent for the tenants of the Arches. Ms Murray explained that she was intending to go and visit the companies involved and there would be some flexibility as they were keen to keep companies such as the art gallery in the Arches as part of the business mix.

10.3 The Business Retention and Inward Investment (BRII) strategy was mentioned and it was agreed to bring this back to the Committee in the future.

10.4 **RESOLVED** – *that the Committee receive update reports both on the impact of the recession and on the BRII at a future meeting.*

11. FOREDOWN TOWER - VERBAL UPDATE

11.1 The Head of Royal Pavilion & Museums, Janita Bagshawe, provided a verbal update on the Foredown Tower. The Head of Terms were still being negotiated between the lawyers. The Sea Cadets had been applying for funding to support the building work and had submitted a bid to the Peoples' Millions. In August there would be an event to celebrate the centenary of the Tower.

11.2 **RESOLVED** – *that the Committee continue to receive updates on the Foredown Tower.*

12. LONDON ROAD SPD - VERBAL UPDATE

12.1 The Chairman, Councillor Bill Randall, updated the Committee on the draft London Road SPD. There had been a very good scrutiny workshop on 28 April held for Culture, Tourism and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee members and Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee members. The SPD had lots of good ideas and the draft SPD was now out for consultation.

13. WORK PROGRAMME AND AD-HOC PANEL

13.1 The Chairman, Councillor Bill Randall, introduced the report on the work programme of the Committee. He outlined the progress of the ad-hoc panel which had held four very informative and interesting sessions. The report was now being drafted and there was a private meeting of the panel arranged for 20 July to discuss the draft report. The final report would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee on 7 October for approval. The other Panel Members, Councillor Melanie Davis and Councillor Steve Harmer-Strange agreed that the ad-hoc Panel had heard from some excellent witnesses and learnt a great deal.

13.2 The Committee discussed potential subjects for the next ad-hoc panel. A request was submitted to the Committee by Councillor Peter West for a panel to look at bringing empty commercial properties back into use. A request to look at New England House was submitted

by Councillor Ian Davey. Councillor Amy Kennedy introduced the request on behalf of Councillor West and Councillor Bill Randall on behalf of Councillor Ian Davey.

13.3 On New England House, the timing of any ad-hoc panel was discussed, given that the London Road SPD was currently out for consultation. The idea of creating incubator space and the idea that a digital games course may be linked to space in New England House was also raised. Several Members expressed reservations over the timing of any panel to look at New England House, suggesting this should wait until after the consultation on London Road had closed.

13.4 The suggestion was made that a potential subject was children's sport across the city, which was agreed as an interesting subject, but one that potentially crossed over to both the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CYPOSC) and the Environment and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ECSOSC).

13.5 Following a request for a suggestion that reflected the cultural remit of the Committee, the Head of Culture & Economy, Paula Murray suggested Arts and Cultural Provision for Young People.

13.6 The Committee agreed to request scoping reports on: New England House: bringing commercial properties back into use: and arts and cultural provision for young people for the next meeting. These reports would then be used to make a decision on what would be the subject of the next ad-hoc panel.

13.7 The Committee also agreed to hold a scrutiny workshop on the Gardens' Strategy and one on equal access and mobile libraries. The Chairman reminded the Committee that the date of the next meeting had been changed to 7 October 2009.

13.6 RESOLVED – *(a) the committee requested scoping reports on the following potential ad-hoc panel subjects: (1) New England House; (2) bringing commercial properties back into use; (3) Arts and Cultural Provision for Young Children for the next meeting.*
(b) the Committee agreed that scrutiny workshops should be held on the Gardens' Strategy and on equal access and mobile libraries.

14. MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

14.1 The Committee went into Part Two to discuss Major Projects.

The meeting concluded at 7.00pm

Signed

Chair

