

AGENDA ITEM 58

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CULTURE, TOURISM & ENTERPRISE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.00PM 4 FEBRUARY 2010

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Randall (Chairman); Davis, Drake (Deputy Chairman), Harmer-Strange, Hawkes, Kennedy, C Theobald and Turton

Co-opted Members:

PART ONE

47. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

47(a) Substitutes

There were none.

47(b) Declaration of interest

There were none.

47(c) 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 a 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 said Act.

RESOLVED – *that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the discussion of Item 56 under Category 3.*

48. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

48.1 Following a question on the minutes from the budget meeting on 14 December 2009, it was confirmed that the Brighton History Centre would remain open in its current location, and

that the Booth Museum would not be closing on the additional days as had been originally proposed. Funding had been found.

48.2 RESOLVED – *that the minutes of 23 November 2009 and 14 December 2009 be approved and signed by the Chairman.*

49. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

49.1 The Chairman informed the Committee that he had been to a meeting with the Economic Partnership to discuss the scrutiny panel report on Environmental Industries. There had been a very positive response to the report. Both universities had been very supportive of the recommendations in the report. It had been noted that Brian Eno, the guest Artistic Director of the Festival this year, was very interested in environmental issues so this may feature in his approach to the Festival. The Chairman had also attended the Cabinet Member Meeting when the Executive Response to the Environmental Industries report had been agreed. This had also been a positive response to the scrutiny report.

49.2 The Chairman had also recently met again with SeaRoc to discuss the release of wind farms from the Crown Estate programme. SeaRoc plan to have a significant involvement in 5 of the 9 wind farms.

49.3 The Chairman welcomed the two external speakers to the meeting.

50. PRESENTATION ON DIGITAL GAMING

50.1 Fred Hasson, the Executive Director of Redbedlam, a small Brighton based start up company specialising in Massively Multiplayer Online Games and Virtual Worlds development and technology, gave a presentation on the digital gaming industry (for copy see minute book). He outlined his professional background which included founding the trade association for the industry, Tiga, and the European Games Development Federation (EGDF). He was currently involved in fundraising for Redbedlam in addition to being a voting member of Bafta and a member of the British Screen Advisory Group (BSAC).

50.2 The UK currently represented around half of all the games activity in Europe. The industry employed around 3,000 publishers, 1,000 distributors, 14,000 in retail, and 9,000 developers.

50.3 In Brighton, there were a number of companies including: 2 from Disney (racing games and club penguin), Second Life (virtual world company); Babel and Black Rock (translations of games for other markets); web agencies and shops. This accounted for around 1000 jobs. Both universities in the city carried out research into gaming, and on 12-14 July the national developers' conference would be held in Brighton. Brighton and Guildford were key clusters in the games industry, along with the West Midlands and the North West.

50.4 The average wage for developers was £30,000 and the global industry was worth \$45bn. In the UK in 2009 the industry was worth £3.6bn, down from £4.1bn in 2008. However, this was hardware and software (£1.9bn) and not as much hardware had been purchased in 2009 as in 2008 after the original launch of hardware such as the Wii. The industry was largely recession-proof. HMV had stated that the games industry had saved them from the recession. 80% of the above revenue was disc-based with 20% computer and phone based as platforms. The Wii and Nintendo DS had expanded the market with over 50% of homes with a games console.

Web agencies were now included in the games industry and internet sites such as Facebook especially was bringing in more internet players.

50.5 Mr Hasson outlined the issues facing the industry in Brighton & Hove. The lack of affordable good looking offices was a large problem. A recent national survey had also shown that 70% of developers would leave the UK, particularly to go to Canada. In Canada, they were offering many incentives: 40% of salaries for new jobs created were paid back in cash to companies: there was a five-year tapered tax break available for foreign nationals relocating; and the research and development tax credits advantages (defined in the same international way) were double those of the UK. UK universities were too supply-driven and generalised games courses were not often relevant to the needs of development companies. There was also a heavy reliance on US and Japanese finance for making console games. Mr Hasson also raised the question of what would happen if, after the election, SEEDA was abolished. How prepared were the Council to step in to help entrepreneurs? Mr Hasson concluded by reminding the Committee that games skills in the future could be used in many different ways especially in training and education and information, for example to treat post-traumatic stress, or to help children visualise what was happening in their bodies during illness.

50.6 In response to questions, Mr Hasson told the Committee he had heard good things about the Universities in the city. However, universities needed to talk to companies and find ways to work together. The issue of office space and the need for high tech office space was discussed, including the future plans for New England House. Mr Hasson noted that the Government had recently awarded £3.5m to Dundee and Salford for centres of excellence in the gaming industry and there was currently a question mark over whether there could be a third centre of excellence. He suggested that Brighton could be that third centre.

50.7 Following a question on what the Council could do to help the industry, Mr Hasson remarked that the gaming industry needed to feel appreciated. A symbolic gesture at the July 'Develop' conference would be helpful, for example, welcome signs or taking the Mayor around to visit studios.

50.8 The Chairman thanked Mr Hasson for his most interesting and informative session.

51. PRESENTATION ON OPEN HOUSES

51.1 The Chairman welcomed Judy Stevens of the Artists Open Houses (AOH) to the meeting. Ms Stevens outlined the history of the Open Houses which started 29 years ago in Fiveways when one artist, Ned Hoskins, opened his house to the public. Groups of others followed his initiative and created individual trails of around 12 houses each. Six years ago it was decided to produce one dedicated brochure and website for all the trails. Artists Open Houses was a not-for-profit, limited by guarantee company. The Open Houses had grown hugely to around 220 venues with over 1,200 artists and makers. It was a major showcase for work and in the four weekends of the festival last year, over £1m of sales were made. A survey indicated that 230,000 people regularly visited Open Houses: that equated to 100 a minute. People found the Houses a non-threatening way to engage with the visual arts. 60% of these people were local. The majority of the artists were resident in the city.

51.2 Ms Stevens emphasised that the Open Houses were across the city, including Portslade, Bevendean and Whitehawk. They embraced all artists, including the homeless, children, and those who were marginalised geographically or through learning difficulties. They were also

working with day care centres. Homeless and marginalised people had reported feeling positively better following the Open Houses work.

51.3 Open Houses did not want to raise entry fees and were looking at the possibility of bursaries. They received no funding of any sort.

51.4 In May 2009, in response to the lack of a contemporary art gallery in the city, the 'HOUSE' festival was created. HOUSE was a curated festival which provided a platform for artists working in less conventional ways. It took place in small art spaces and houses around the city. This year it was called HOUSE Gallery and 10 separate artists would have a project, each with an installation in a single room. These rooms across the city would create the gallery. For example, local artist Tamsin Williams would be working with inhabitants of Embassy Court, including a group of Somali residents to create a performance piece based on childhood games to be shown in the public area of Embassy Court; another artist, Sam Curtis would be working with four Open Houses and creating a treasure trail; and audio-visual artist Nigel Shafran aimed to reflect Brighton & Hove as Cycling Town. In Wellington House, an artist with learning difficulties was working with a renowned curator (in order to develop curatorial skills) and a full-time gallery space was planned to showcase work from local marginalised artists.

51.5 AOH was developing free education and participation events and working with the cultural sector to provide change. They had recently applied to the Arts Council for funding and the Council would provide match funding if they were successful.

51.6 Ms Stevens showed the Committee a short film produced by one volunteer student.

51.7 Following a question on costs, Ms Stevens confirmed the Open Houses (not HOUSE) cost around £80,000 which was largely met by the money paid by artists to be in the brochure but crucially this does not include payment to those employed in producing the festival. It was £240 for a quarter page and £400 for a half page. One house may have a number of artists in. Councillors praised the Open Houses and the innovative concept that had been copied elsewhere. Over the years, younger artists worked in different mediums in addition to painting and ceramics. Ms Stevens informed the Committee that it was too early to say whether the recession had impacted on the Open Houses as registration was ongoing. Early signs were that the recession had not impacted greatly: it was an affordable way for artists to sell their work.

51.8 The Chairman thanked Ms Stevens for her fascinating presentation and film.

52. ROYAL PAVILION GARDEN STRATEGY

52.1 Janita Bagshawe, Head of Royal Pavilion and Museums introduced the report. It had built on a scrutiny workshop for councillors in September 2009. The plan was about managing the gardens and achieving the necessary balance. Horticultural maintenance, eco-sustainable principles and the demand for use needed to be considered. For events, the balance was between the general users of the gardens and those attracted by special events. An events policy was being drawn up, with a zoning policy to enable different parts of the gardens to play to their strengths. For example, small scale events may be in front of the café, with high end

income generating events possible behind the Royal Pavilion on the eastern façade. The income generated from such events would be used to cover maintenance costs. Ms Bagshawe confirmed that further consultation would now be taking place on the plan.

52.2 Councillors then asked questions. It was asked whether the team were linked into the nature series of events run by City Parks: Ms Bagshawe replied she would look into this. Following a question about the feasibility of putting bee hives into the gardens, Ms Bagshawe also agreed to consider this and report back. It was agreed that the events would need to be carefully assessed for their impact but that it could be an import way to generate income. Once the headlines had been agreed then the criteria would be finalised. A question was asked about the reference to maintenance problems linked to the CCT and Ms Bagshawe replied this was some time ago but she would look into the problem. The term 'Intellectual Access' was explained as the understanding of gardens in the historic sense, for example, the historical context explains why the grass may be long. The timetable for the Management and Maintenance plan was the next stage of consultation with stakeholders and to Cabinet Member Meeting in June 2010. In response to a question on events on the lawn by the café, Ms Bagshawe explained that this lawn was used frequently with many people passing through. In the future, links would be made with other open spaces in the city, for example, Preston Park would be a better venue for open theatre than the Pavilion Gardens.

52.3 Ms Bagshawe told the Committee that the Plan should make it easier to attract funding. In response to a question on closing the gates, it was noted that this was not practical.

52.4 Councillors praised the scrutiny workshop and were pleased to see contributions reflected in the plan. The Chairman thanked Ms Bagshawe and the Committee agreed that their comments should be passed on to the Cabinet Member in due course.

52.5 RESOLVED: *to ask that the Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Tourism considers the comments and recommendations made by this Committee for the Garden Strategy.*

53. FOREDOWN TOWER - VERBAL UPDATE

53.1 The Principal Solicitor, Commercial Projects, Bob Bruce informed the Committee that although the Heads of Terms for the Foredown Tower had been drawn up, and the lease was due to be signed, the Adur Sea Cadets had recently informed the Council that they wanted to establish a Community Interest Company (CIC) before they would sign the lease. The Cabinet Member Meeting in September had agreed the lease but that was on the grounds it was signed by the Adur Sea Cadets not a CIC. If a CIC were formed, the amended papers would need to go back to the Cabinet Member for agreement.

53.2 Mr Bruce explained that Community Interest Companies were launched in 2005 as a specific vehicle for social enterprise companies who wished to be seen as associated with the community. CICs were halfway between a company and a charity. They had similar responsibilities to other companies in terms of annual reporting, but the CIC Regulator had to apply the community interest test that any reasonable person would see the community purpose, and also confirm that any profit is recycled back. Community purpose' was difficult to define but excluded political motivation or too narrow objectives.

53.4 It had not been thought necessary to have a CIC as the Sea Cadets were a national organisation which was community based. Also the lease for the Foredown Tower contained a lot of detail on issues such as access and school usage.

53.5 Mr Bruce asked the Committee for their opinion, including on who should sit on the Board of the proposed CIC. Should Ward Councillors or Council officers?

53.6 A question was asked about whether the formation of a CIC would slow the process down, and it was confirmed that the handover would be delayed. Mr Bruce emphasised that the priority was to complete the transfer. There was no objection to the idea of a CIC but it was unfortunate the issue had arisen so late in the process. The main issue now was the membership of the CIC.

53.7 Those Councillors who expressed a view, felt that there was no requirement for Councillors or officers to sit on the Board of the CIC but that it should be community representatives.

53.8 CTEOSC expressed frustration that this issue had arisen so late in the process and urged officers to do all they can to keep the process moving forward. The Chairman requested that the committee be kept informed of progress.

54. ENVIRONMENTAL INDUSTRIES SCRUTINY REPORT - EXECUTIVE RESPONSE

54.1 The Head of Culture and Economy, Paula Murray, introduced the Executive Response to the ad-hoc scrutiny panel report on Environmental Industries. The response had been agreed at the Cabinet Member Meeting in January 2010. The Executive response congratulated the panel for their report and accepted the seven major recommendations. It accepted that these recommendations could be delivered upon. On the recommendation for a lead officer for environmental industries, Ms Murray informed the Committee that it was not affordable to have one person for one sector, but that the creative industries post was being reshaped to be an economic development post that focused on particular sub-sectors. The environmental industries were a priority now. The Executive Response had also added an objective to include fundraising in the work of the new economic development post.

54.2 Ms Murray informed the Committee that the Chairman, Councillor Randall, had presented the ad-hoc panel report to the Economic Partnership and it had been well received. The recommendation for an audit of environmental industries in the city had come out as a priority during this discussion. This would be a priority for the new post-holder in April 2010.

54.3 It was confirmed that the minor recommendations were also agreed by the Cabinet Member. The report would now go to Full Council.

54.4 **RESOLVED:** *(1) to note the Executive Response; and
(2) to agree to the update on the implementation of the Panel's recommendations in twelve months time.*

55. WORK PROGRAMME

55.1 The Chairman informed the Committee that the next ad-hoc panel on the cultural provision for children would hold its first scoping meeting on 24 February. The members were

Councillor Mel Davis, Council Rachel Fryer, and Councillor Carol Theobald. The Chairman noted that Councillor Davis had expressed an interest in Chairing the Panel and CTEOSC members agreed with this proposition. It was noted that the final decision on Chairing was for the panel members to make but CTEOSC's view would be expressed.

55.2 The Committee agreed to add Performance Indicators to the agenda for the meeting in July and this would focus on new business registrations. The marketing of premises and venues had been discussed at a previous meeting and it was agreed to add this to the work programme.

55.3 The issue of music venues in the city was discussed and a venue operator had offered to bring some other venue operators to a future meeting to outline what is happening in their sector, and the barriers that needed to be addressed. It was suggested that this could be the subject of a future scrutiny workshop. There was an item on the April agenda on music venues with a paper from Kevin Nixon of the Brighton Music Institute which may be a good starting point for this discussion.

55.4 It was noted that the item to be referred to Council from this agenda was Item 54, the Executive Response to the Environmental Industries report.

56. MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

56.1 The Committee went into Part 2 to consider Major Projects. There was no substantive discussion.

The meeting concluded at 6.15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

