Appendix 1

Potential topics for scrutiny panels

1. **Music Industry**

The importance of the Music Industry was highlighted in a recent national report showing that: *'The value of the British live music industry last year was **£1.54bn**, up an impressive 9.4% on 2008'* at a time of recession. In Brighton and Hove, this is certainly a key, dynamic and growing sector evidenced by the following for example:

- The city hosts one of the leading UK music industry showcases The Great Escape, which attracts audiences of 15,000
- There are at least 45 venues that regularly host live music with a total combined capacity of 18,457
- The city has at least 5 independent record shops
- There are an estimated 500 local bands and many local choirs, orchestras and music societies
- Has a population keen to experience live music e.g. 2 Universities
- In the annual Taking Part Survey undertaken by Government, attending live music events is high on the list of cultural activity

In overall terms, a Scrutiny Panel exercise could establish in more detail the scale and size and importance of the sector and most importantly its future potential. It could make recommendations on potential interventions by the city council and other partners and contribute to the development of other relevant policy and guidance.

A report produced by Brighton Institute of Modern Music (BIMM) for the B&H Arts Commission concluded that the city *'…has one of the highest numbers of live music venues per capita in the UK, which is central to the city's reputation of enjoying a 'thriving' music scene'.* But when it comes to the larger names in music *'…we are a **commuter city'**.* This is primarily because there is '*a shortage of venues with over 600 capacity'*.

Other key local issues were also highlighted in the BIMM report or have arisen from recent events relating to smaller music venues and festivals in the city. These include:

<u>Do we have the right number and size of music Venues?</u>

- Small venues – a healthy number but the recent problems facing venues such as the Freebutt
- Intermediate venues – only 2 now Old Market closed down
- Large venues 600+ Brighton Centre, Corn Exchange, Dome
- Potential of Falmer Stadium

What is the key role of festivals in the city?

- The growth in revenue from live music nationally is seen to be mainly due to Festivals – the top 200 festivals contribute £450m to the economy
- Successes in the city of The Great Escape and Brighton Live
- However*, 'the purely commercial music festival businesses has not yet fared well in the city and its surrounds'* e.g. Beach Down
- Open air events such as Fat Boy Slim, White Air – are we getting them right and can the city cope with them?

What are the financial implications of being a 'commuter' city for music?
The Panel could consider what revenue is lost in terms of both residents of B&H travelling to other towns to see live music and the potential employment and tourism opportunities that could result if suitable larger venues were available in the city.

This scrutiny review is recommended to take place to produce the following beneficial outcomes:

- A strategy for enabling the continuing growth of the live music scene in the city.

Recommendation – possible panel topic.

2. How to Support Independents and Develop Brighton & Hove's Unique Retail Offer

The original issue that was raised was looking at the impact of supermarkets on small businesses including:

- Can the Planning process be used to limit the number of larger chains/supermarkets
- Their impact on small businesses during a recession
- The loss of green spaces

However some of the benefits of supermarkets need to be acknowledged, including lower food prices and enabling developments in the city to take place. Research has also shown that in some areas the building of a new supermarket has attracted new shoppers to the area e.g. the Tesco in Hove and the impact on George Street.

Local stores are more likely to have a higher economic multiplier effect, with profits being re-spent in the local economy. Local retailers also provide some of the essential character and visitor offer of the city. Data has shown the resilience of small local retail shops in the city in maintaining employment and increasing stock over the past decade. The All-Parliamentary Small Shops Group report has spoken about *'…the intense pressure small shops face'*.

Nationally in 2007 supermarkets had an 85% share of the UK groceries market, with the 'big four' accounting for an almost 75% share.

Supermarkets have A1 class use and planning cannot be refused on the basis of competition, so councils only have limited in power to prevent more supermarkets locating in their area.

The RB of Kensington & Chelsea set up a Retail Commission to look at how larger chains and small retailers could co-exist. The Commission found that although the national trend for fewer shops, but larger units, would continue:

'Small specialist shops are essential to sustain the diversity, vibrancy and character of shopping areas'.

The recommendations, produced in 2007, contained a set of actions for local authorities which could be explored in relation to this city. Similar work was also undertaken in Leicester in 2008.

A recent report from the New Economics Foundation highlighted that the towns most dependent on big chains were also likely to be the most vulnerable to the economic crisis. http://www.neweconomics.org/press-releases/clone-town-britain-2010-high-street-diversity-still-on-endangered-list

Importance of small traders in the city

Figure show that *'**80.5%** of Brighton & Hove businesses employ less than 5 people'*

Concerns over the potential impacts of supermarkets at specific locations e.g Portland Road

Traders concern in this area led to work being done promoting the Council's support for small traders

Business Retention and Inward |nvestment Strategy highlights the importance of retaining and supporting existing businesses

Council initiatives to support local retailers

These include:

- Be Local Buy Local
- Business Lifebelt Campaign – Ride the Wave campaign is part of the Council's 'counter recession' work

LSP – A key priority is to 'Promote Enterprise and Learning' and highlights the work of the 'Be Local, Buy Local' and Business Lifebelt campaigns to assist employment and economic development.

Council – 'Protect the environment while growing the economy'. The Corporate Plan refers to the need to protect our *'unique retail experiences'*[1] and giving space for businesses to start and grow.

[1] BHCC Corporate Plan 2008-2011 http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/performance_team/Corporate_Plan_2008_V310708.pdf

Due to the size of the topic, the scrutiny could take as a starting point looking at how the council can ensure it offers a consistent and effective support to local retailers. Focus on the powers the council has, including through Planning and special initiatives, to:

'…mitigate the closure of independent retail and maximise the opportunities around local, independent and secondary retail centres.[2]*'*

It could then determine whether it wanted to look at further issues such as those outlined in the Recommendations section below.

This issue was considered in a brief report to Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects Cabinet Member Meeting on 15th September 2009. However it would be beneficial to look at this issue in greater detail. This could include the following outcomes, to:

- Map Council services which relate to, or are used by, local retailers and larger shops and assess their consistency
- Consider the impact of express supermarkets in specific locations in the city
- Develop pro-active intelligence about potential new multinational retail units and use to assist enforcement
- Look at further ways of assisting local retailers and showing them the Council's support
- Understand the impact of Coalition cuts to business support services
- Examining ways to attract foreign spend into the city and on smaller

Recommendation – Possible panel topic, although waiting changes to national legislations may be sensible.

3. Innovative ways to support culture

Issue: Reduced funding in future years may have a detrimental impact upon non statutory cultural provision. CTEOSC is already considering in its work-programme the 'economic case for culture'.

A Scrutiny panel could build upon this and look at:

- alternative and additional ways to support this sector such as joint commissioning, examining other related business models and the issue of private donors.

- Creating a business case for culture for the

- Other models of provision such as Glasgow Life which is a company limited by guarantee which has been established to manage culture

[2] Impact of Supermarkets on Local Businesses report to Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects CMM, agenda http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=2147&T=10

and sporting services in this city. Its sub-brands include Glasgow Arts, Glasgow Museums and Glasgow Sports. The Board of this company includes councillors and the former leader of the Council.

Recommendation – possible panel topic.

4. End of Renaissance funding

Renaissance is a governmentt funded programme to transform regional museums. B&H currently receives c. £1m per year for this programme. Not currently clear how projects will be affected in the future. Also not known how will the shortfall be made up when renaissance funding comes to an end? A verbal update on the future of this funding from the Head of Royal Pavilion & Museums to CTEOSC on 1st July highlighted that future of alternative funding opportunities was not clear, for example:

'The Museums, Libraries & Archives (MLA) review was considering core funding museums with designated collections and big audiences. This would be 5 year funding. Challenge funding is being considered for other museums which would involve strategic commissioning.'

Recommendation – There is already a significant amount of work being undertaken in this area and scrutiny will be involved in this issue through:

- A Museum workshop which will consider this issue is being run in October 2010
- Report on the business case for culture to on CTEOSC workprogramme

There would be limited utility in establishing a panel.

5. Developing B&H as a destination

Issue: balancing its appeal as a party town against other tourism opportunities and developing the city as a conference town

A SWOT analysis to develop the most recent tourism strategy highlighted as a weakness;

> *'…achieving the right balance between the hedonism of night-time economy and desire to provide quality offer to all visitors'.*

This is an area where a significant amount of policy/strategy/monitoring is already being done, for example:

- No significant concerns were raised about Tourism when CTEOSC received a report on the Tourism Strategy at their meeting on 1st July 2010. A report on Tourism highlighted the good performance in this area, which included being given an average score of 8.45 in the 2009 On Street Visitor survey
- A comprehensive tourism strategy has been developed for 2008-2018.

Recommendation – Monitoring of the tourism strategy should be built into CTEOSC's work-programme.

6. Provision of Arts for the Deaf Community

In working with the city's deaf community and John Walker (Convenor of Deaf Studies, Sussex Uni), an issue has emerged surrounding the lack of theatre and cinema performances in B&H where there is provision of a British Sign Language interpreter, and the general exclusion experienced by the city's deaf community in terms of the arts. This might make a good topic for a one-day session, as per the snow scrutiny.

There are different levels of communication with deaf people, depending on which language they were taught at school. This could have been only Sign Language (SL), or SL and English. Generally, deaf people's main form of communication is SL. Some people are deaf and blind and their communication and access to services are even more limited.

Current issues

- SL isn't always an effective way of accessing cultural activities as deaf people concentrate on the interpreter and miss out on the performance.
- Some deaf people prefer subtitles if their level of English is good, but not all deaf people can read.
- General number, timing and publicity for cinema/theatre performances for deaf people
- Speed of the interpreters and subtitles should be at a manageable
- Theatre interpreters cost more as they have to learn the scripts. If the attendance is not good then it may not be lucrative for the Theatre.
- Selected days at cultural attractions – museum/Pavillion etc – have been successful
- Location of signers/subtitles can be problematic
- Highly visual performances e.g. christmas pantomimes are popular
- Are special performances commercially viable?
- Deaf Theatre Groups present performances e.g. Krazy Katz. These tend to be small plays rather than the full play and can be aimed more at children.
- Some deaf people are unable to read and therefore are unable to fill out the forms to join the library membership. Feedback received was that on an occasion no one at the library could help the deaf person, so they ended up walking out.
- Anecdotal evidence suggests other cities (e.g. Bristol) offer a wider choice of films with subtitles.
- Hearing people sometimes complain about the subtitles in films, as it can reduce the size of the picture.

Recommendation – Ask for a presentation/report to be added to the Committee's work plan for spring 2011. This may be something to pick up as a panel after that.

7. Seafront facilities for children and young people

Give Brighton facilities for children and families that we can be proud of, the old paddling pool which was ideal in design has just been removed, and a small fancy one supplied, nowhere for parents or grandparents who accompany these children, to sit down, or toilets. it is just paying lip service to the huge demand for childrens play areas. It seems the council and therefore the town doesn't want families here. I'm glad my children are grown up, but when my grandchildren visit I am ashamed to show them the only place to play – that small paddling pool. Come on Brighton, we have hundreds if not thousands of kids who need proper facilities on our sea front, take a lesson from Worthing, Littlehampton, or Eastbourne!

Visit Brighton describes Brighton Seafront as;
'Dominated by the famous pebble beach and the architectural beauty of Regency squares and crescents, Brighton and Hove seafront is a relaxed, friendly and diverse place to eat, shop and play. Try your hand at volleyball, basketball and a wealth of watersports, go east on the Volks, England's oldest electric railway, stop off at the Sea Life Centre or head west for the children's play area, the green expanse of Hove Lawns and watersports of Hove Lagoon'

It is hard to see where a scrutiny panel could add value to this issue; there are a wide range of facilities available on the seafront already.

8. Personal Finance in the City

National CAB figures for the first quarter of 2010/11 show problems relating to consumer credit debts showed a slight decrease for the first time in two years. However there were still significant increases in enquiries about most priority debts, which are those where the consequences of not paying are most serious, between Q1 2009/10 and Q1 2010/11.

- Water supply debts rose 18%
- Council tax arrears rose 7%
- Telephone debts rose 7%
- Rent arrears to private landlords rose 18%

Independent Legal advice providers within Brighton and Hove including the Citizens Advice Bureau, BHT and MACS gave one to one advice to over 17,000 residents in 2008–09, helping them to deal with their debts, maximise their incomes and stay in their homes during the difficult economic climate. Much of this work was and continues to be delivered and supported by highly skilled, trained and dedicated volunteers in the city.

Changes at a national level to tax, benefits and pensions will clearly have an impact on debt levels. The publication of the Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2012 will provide some clarity on this.

Brighton and Hove has a large student population, a recent survey found the average debt per year of study for the year 2010 has risen to £5,340, an increase of 5.4% from the previous year. Students starting university in the next academic year will graduate with an average of almost £25,000 worth of debt.

Recommendation – It is suggested that as this is a very cross-cutting issue (benefits, third sector, housing, council tax, credit union, employment etc) that a workshop session for scrutiny members is developed in 2011. There is an LSP group that seeks to coordinate the work of advice services, and any scrutiny activity should be linked with this group.