

Culture Consortium
Minutes of the meeting
26 April 2024, Leonardo Hotel

Present

Andrew Gates	SYMCA
Roger Bateman	Sheffield Hallam University
Kate Brindley	SCC/Culture Strategy
Amy Cooper	Sheffield Children, Youth and Family Consortium
Laura Clarke	Arts Catalyst (Co-Chair)
Sonia Gayle	African Heritage Culture Forum
Annabel Grundy	Sheffield DocFest
Kirstie Hamilton	Sheffield Museums
Judith Harry	Site Gallery
Katie Matthews	Gut Level
Jo Towler	Music in the Round
Olivier Tsemó	SADACCA (Co-Chair)
Ian Wild	Showroom Workstation
Jo Wingate	SCC/Cultural Pipeline Fund

Apologies

Tom Bird	Sheffield Theatre
Diana Buckley	SCC
Mojisola Elufowoju	Utopia Theatre
Georgina Kettlewell	Yorkshire Artspace
Neil Jones	SCC/Programmes and Partnerships
Daljinder Singh	Theatre Deli
Wendy Ulyett	SCC/Marketing
Sara Unwin	University of Sheffield
Rose Wilcox	The Leadmill

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Andrew Gates, South Yorkshire Mayoral Authority

Andrew explained there was currently no cultural and creative strategy for South Yorkshire but, if Oliver is returned at the elections, there will be a push around the strategy. SYMCA will work on the added value of working across South Yorkshire. SYMCA is often a co-funder; for example, is a co-coordinator for shared prosperity fund; £1m ARG fund and has supported the Cultural Pipeline Fund though he felt that more investment capital could be directed into the sector. SYMCA will continue to invest in cultural assets; has contributed £2m to Harmony Works. Skills and education are already a big lever, took on function from national government. Oliver and Tom Hunt are both in lockstep as to how want to work in terms of advocacy and co-creating the story.

Ian raised some recent conversations from the cultural and creative industries network. Comments/questions had included:

- re. SYMCA's work on the theatre sector: a report by Iain Bennett had positioned South Yorkshire in a good place to move forward but it was felt we may be reverting into silos within local authority boundaries.

- what are the next steps for SYMCA, there had been talk of strategy for quite a long time. Opportunities are being missed by not being more joined up.

Andrew stated that after the election there would be a clear mandate to do the strategy. Helpful to know what opportunities are being missed, it helps to make a case.

Questions from the consortium:

- Query of priorities for advocacy and investment.

Andrew stated this is tbc, have worked on data, insights and intelligence.

- How help scale up NPO's and potential NPO's in city.

Andrew gave the example of unlocking feasibility funding. The visitor economy partnership work is helping to promote destination marketing – and bridges with culture. Cllr Tom Hunt is the visitor economy lead.

- There is a NMDC (National Museums Director's Council) reception at Houses of Parliament on 7th May, wondered how to continue that conversation with SYMCA.

Andrew is very open to getting the mayor involved in events and to plug in politician's support where there are opportunities.

- What proportion of budget is allocated to culture.

Doesn't know proportion of SPF going into culture (even when it goes into this sector, investment isn't always visible as 'culture') it is fairly small but could've been none.

Greater devolution to South Yorkshire would give flexibility to take funding to culture (less of a list from Whitehall). Will be able to take decisions. The future feels positive, and data is key.

- anything needed from consortium or sector? important to have channel of communications.

Kate has a forthcoming meeting and will be talking Investment. There are culture schemes and could be more, but they could also become more known.

- Arts Council are picking up re. rhetoric, Harmony Works support is positive news but still need more traction at the grassroots level.

Andrew updated that SYMCA are convening a session with early year (music) specialists with a view to preparing a South Yorkshire-led Place Partnerships bid.

3. Culture Strategy Update – Kate Brindley

- The engagement process is at the stage of final one-to-ones and specialist group work. *Digital survey launches on 6th May, the team need help sharing to networks, last piece of main engagement, throughout May. Please encourage distribution. It's open to anyone including public.

Getting to end of engagement – end of May. Identifying gaps. The Draft Missions are being honed, with a smaller group helping write these up.

Looking at crafting the delivery plan, giving priorities for next 5 years and started a pipeline on capital projects.

There will be a Draft of the strategy in June. The strategy team are contracted to the end of June. The new local authority culture team are due to start June and July and there

will be a transition to finalise the strategy. Launch the delivery mechanism. Doesn't stop there – it starts.

What need to express:

- Governance: representative body for city- how evolve where want to be.
- Connections, connectors, bridging networks – how resourced within sector and other sectors e.g. health, business, climate – big theme.
- Physical and digital hubs. Need for digital/physical connecting space – how it looks – examples nationally.
- Visibility, celebration, skills, showcasing.

Questions included:

- Will it have captured enough voice from freelancers?

It's been very well attended by freelancers – and led by a freelance team.

- The reach of the survey/engagement regarding audiences and general public (demand) was questioned.

Kate added that because Sheffield hasn't done this work in the sector for so long, it kept a focus. Can't yet go out strongly on audiences, it's a staged process – but the digital survey is open to the public.

- Request that the final document has a cost-benefit analysis of the cultural actions/a link to economic value. Need to be armed with information when seeing politicians etc. Some work in this area was done in the initial stages of the audit.

- Questions as to what the delivery plan will look like and level of detail, including the issue of governance and the transition plan for this.

Very aware we need to look into this and that will go beyond the contracts of the current CS project team.

The delivery plan was a massive piece of work in a short space of time.

Kate expressed that the Cultural strategy is the beginning of the delivery plan.

- It was commented that we're all delivering the strategy and implementation.

- Opportunity to identify the gaps – help to strengthen that argument. Crucial to know what delivery plan looks like and establish linkage points e.g. back to Andrew; connects to Westminster.

Kate added that it's how we co-create the delivery plan from this point.

- It was questioned whether there will there be a consultation.

There will be a consultation in June.

- Were there any pieces of work to look at governance specifically.

Governance will need to be a delivery plan priority. Can make top line suggestions, Rebecca did some work on this, can't design the delivery plan solution.

- New culture team are to pick up with consortium and collective.

- Question re. Connections and Connectivity.

Point of network mapping is that it's not just same people all the time – meaningful connectivity is a big sector need. Solution – whether self-organising or supporting, is a piece of design /investment. Can offer some models.

Governance needs to drive the strategy – needs to be a governance model. City goals model slightly ahead – keeping an eye on this, so we don't re-invent the wheel.

Leadership big challenge for Sheffield.

- Intangible heritage was raised in relation to the strategy.

Kate stated heritage will feature in the cultural strategy – some definition will have to feature; it will be a wholistic strategy with no hard edge.

The wider dissemination strategy was discussed – need to know format medium, language and launch. There needs to be assets in an easily shareable form E.g. Tik Tok. A key audience of allies, colleagues would be interested in, and benefit from, receiving the strategy. There needs to be a call to action with key players – need a moment to celebrate and disseminate.

Kate agreed it's important to push for a dissemination plan and to give suggestions what would like to see. Dissemination, an opportunity to celebrate, who go to, it's critical to keep this on the agenda. Will be autumn when ready to do this.

- Thangam Debonnaire had made it clear every city should have a strategy and had asked to be kept informed. Would be an achievement if held up in parliament as a good example.

4. Draft Minutes and Matters Arising

Approved with 1 amendment to agenda item 1, Matters Arising (revised wording below).

- Sonia to discuss a joined-up approach (as part of the wider cultural strategy review and also with Sheffield Museums re: Graves Gallery 'feasibility review' and the central library) for a Sheffield Heritage Centre that reflects Sheffield's diverse communities overall.

Matters Arising/actions from the previous meeting:

- New appointment to Co-Chair role.

Call for nominations would be emailed to the Consortium members.

- Record to the strategy team the need to dissolve the Culture Consortium and Culture Collective.

This had been recorded.

- Request that 'Screen' is represented on the Strategy Task & Finish group.

National Videogames Museum were now attending the group meetings.

- Low carbon – Jo to speak to Carly.

- Consortium representative to view draft heritage strategy when it is available.

Some discussion of how to approach, especially as JUH aren't present at consortium meetings.

*It was suggested to offer an invitation to attend the meetings, also that Rebecca's successor will provides a bridge between organisations, ensure wide engagement as part of the process.

- MoU to be picked once Sarah is in post.

5. EDI

REP Sheffield – have appointed a new Chair and the anchor organisations are progressing. Need to agree a 3 – 5 year timetable.

Kirstie mentioned that an invitation will be emailed for Caribbean Footsteps on 9th May

The exhibition is shaped by community co-curators.

Sonia raised the idea of a cultural heritage centre, an ongoing destination place for different communities.

6. Climate Action

Judith reported that the Birmingham organisation Indigo have an 'Act Green' research programme throughout May, with a survey to sign up.

Jo had previously found did it a useful tool and set of data.

The climate group formed by Judith and Claudia had a few more sign ups each week.

Judith had spoken at the Festivals Network meeting and a couple more joined.

Another group meeting was due in May.

They had been invited to join a national network of cities with climate groups – Constellations bimonthly meeting.

Looking at collectively applying for lottery funds.

Claudia and Judith went to the culture strategy group re climate. Potential quick wins included rolling out a training programme.

7. AOB

The Consortium noted their thanks to Laura for an excellent job as Co-Chair.

Many thanks to Jackie Pass at Sheffield Theatres for sorting the meeting room at Leonardo.

Action	Who	Deadline/timeframe
- Share the Digital Survey to networks	The Consortium	6 th May – 2 nd June
- Invite nominations for the Co-Chair role.	Jo W to email the consortium	May meeting
- Give feedback to Carly re. Low Carbon Culture grants.	Jo W to speak with Carly	May meeting
Discuss Cultural Strategy dissemination plan. Keep on agenda.	The Consortium and CS team.	June meeting
- Heritage strategy conversation.	Jo W to invite Robin to future CC meetings.	May meeting