

- Present:** Councillor Jane Loffhagen (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Naomi Tweddle, Bill Bilton, Matthew Fido, Gary Hewson, Bill Mara, Adrianna McNulty, Clare Smalley and Calum Watt
- Also in Attendance:** Suhky Johal and Ealden
- Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Helena Mair, Councillor Pat Vaughan and Sarah Loftus

5. Confirmation of Minutes - 07 September 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as an accurate record.

6. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Adrianna McNulty declared a Personal Interest with regard to the agenda item titled 'Cultural Consortium'.

Reason: Mosaic, the company that she worked for, occasionally worked alongside Lincoln BIG.

7. Cultural Consortium

Councillor Jane Loffhagen, Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee, opened the meeting and provided the Committee with a brief introduction of the topic for discussion which was receiving information on the creation of a Cultural Consortium.

Simon Walters (Director for Communities and Environment) introduced the item and reminded the Committee that the purpose of the discussion was to receive information on the creation of a cultural consortium following a successful award of funding to the University of Lincoln, which would bring together arts, community groups and young people, with a view of supporting these groups to develop cultural programmes through the City.

The Committee received a presentation from Simon Walters, Suhky Johal MBE (Director of the Centre for Culture and Creativity, University of Lincoln) and Toby Ealden (Zest Theatre). During consideration of the presentation, the following points were noted:

- The long-term vision was to seize the voice of young people by bringing them into the sphere of developing cultural programmes for the city in the next five to ten years.
- Before the Covid-19 pandemic began, culture and creative sectors had grown twice as fast as other sectors since 2011 and accounted for more than 5% of the UK economy's gross value added.
- Culture alone delivered a growing part of the UK's economic output – valued at £10.9 billion a year with a growth of 57% since 2010.

- The Greater Lincolnshire local enterprise partnership had over 3,000 creative, cultural, and digital businesses and employment in the sector was currently estimated to be 10,710.
- The creative, cultural and digital sectors were significant employers in Lincoln, and accounted for 4.0% of all employment. The City of Lincoln was becoming significant in the region.
- The core element of regeneration in the city had come from the Town Deal Fund and Heritage Action Zone with involvement in the Barbican Building, Drill Hall, Central Market, St Mary's Guildhall, St Mary le Wigford Church and Greyfriars.
- Working from a strong base such as the Lincoln Culture and Arts Partnership (LCAP) which had led to a range of successful projects including cultural destinations and conferences. LCAP had also facilitated the securing of a Cultural Programme under the HAZ and Town Deal Fund investment for major projects, including the Barbican Creative Hub.
- The 1940s weekend, Imp Trail, Frequency Festival and Refresh Lincoln were all cited as good examples of events put on in the City.
- A Welcome Back fund of £175,000 had recently been awarded from the Government to help lift the City Centre through putting on events that increased footfall. Lincoln BIG had been commissioned to deliver this over the next six months.
- There was a real positive influence of culture and creativity on both mental and physical health. Academics readily promoted this both to improve overall health and satisfaction with life. It was a key component in lowering anxiety and depression and could improve a sense of self-worth, self-confidence, self-esteem, and positive emotional expression and relaxation.
- There would be a cultural compact partnership across the city's cultural sector with other sectors and stakeholders to provide leadership and strategic capacity, and act as a delivery mechanism, alongside the cultural consortium.
- During 2020, there was a perception that the city was de-investing in arts and culture opportunities following issues around the closure of The Drill Hall and the Usher Art Gallery. However, the Committee was pleased to learn that The Drill Hall had received funding from the Town Deal Fund to support Lincoln College in operating The Drill Hall, as both as space for learning and for the delivery of arts.
- The Arts Council came forward in early 2021 with an award of £20,000 via the University to develop the creativity and cultural offer within the city. With success elsewhere with pilots, it was felt the development of a cultural compact would be best placed to move this forward.
- There was an ambition for Lincoln to be awarded City of Culture 2029 and to achieve this, the community would need to be at the centre of building cultural programmes for the city.
- As the country emerge from Covid-19, there was a need to bring the community together to spark celebration and conversation.

As a result of the discussions between the Committee and Simon Walters, Sukhy Johal and Toby Ealden, the following points were made: -

- 'Generation Z' was the term given to the ten to nineteen age range of those considered 'young people'. This includes those in Year 5 at Primary school, throughout the whole of the secondary school cohort and into University education age.

- The Arts sector had a torrid time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There was a real importance of culture and creative sectors and the city of Lincoln was seen to be a cultural hub for the County as a whole.
- An award of £18-19 million for Town Deal Fund and each project was currently going through the business case stage. Once approved, the projects could begin and these included: the Barbican Building; The Drill Hall; the Central Market; St. Mary's Guildhall; St Mary le Wigford Church; and Greyfriars. Culture and creativity was considered to be at the centre of the Town Deal Fund.
- Cultural activities could communicate directly with a person's emotions. When listening to music, singing, or dancing, there was a connection with feeling and emotion.
- The preconception when discussing arts and culture often was the high arts. The cultural consortium would be more focused on street level, and curated by experienced professionals..
- Culture and creativity cut across the division in society as individuals could empathise with a story and people would come together regardless of viewpoints.
- Cultural accessibility could be an issue as culture could sometimes be preconceived at a high level and therefore some people might not think it was for them. However, by validating an individual's culture, this barrier could be broken down.
- Cultural infrastructure within the city was relatively weak when compared to the wider Midlands, particularly in terms of venues. However, the positive of this was that you could begin on the streets and in schools so young people would determine the vision and be more involved.
- Art Council England had renewed its vision and was now focused on places, individuals, and neighbourhoods.
- Culture could be considered as being closed away and those who have limited disposable income would not be able to experience it. However, by bringing the arts to communities more people could become more involved.
- The Committee suggested the use of Community Centres, as they were often large venues and available for use within each community. . It was also commented that all of the city's parks had Green flag status, and these could also be used as a valuable resource in culture becoming more accessible and diverse.
- Sarah Loftus at Lincoln BIG had a fund for commissioning local artists to create works for the city centre, nurturing local talent and thus there were no financial implications for the Council.
- It was recognised that in terms of time scales, some elements would be immediate, and some would take a number of years to implement. The first steps were being made and a longer-term time scale would be better known when feedback from young people had been received.

Toby Ealden and Sukhy Johal briefly explained the focus on giving young people a voice and the approach being taken through four phases. The following points were noted:

- Young people's engagement within society and their political and social awareness was incredible and derived in part because they had more access to information .

- Young people had recently lived through a time of real change and therefore could now see how political choices directly impacted their lives.
- Phase one would start in late November 2021 and would involve meeting 1250 children and young people in the school setting from the 10-19 age range, which accounted for approximately 10% of the population within the City giving a firm base to build on.
- The desired outcome was to see what they thought of their city, what they wanted Lincoln to be like in a decade and how culture could aide this.
- The future vision was for older young people to be paid as facilitators to lead workshops supported by professionals, supported by two steering groups.
- Phase one would conclude with the development of Cultural Compact Maxims to be released to delivery partners by 10 December 2021. However, depending on how many responses come in from children and young people, this date might be pushed back.
- Phase two would build on the visibility of young people by signifying Lincoln's direction of travel to young people in the city, future funders, and the wider public.
- In Autumn 2022, there would be a move towards the Cultural Compact and cultural symposium by formally launching the ethos of the Compact and further embedding the Maxims into the hearts and minds of all key partners.
- Phase 4 would finalise the compact and launch the plan.
- The approach would be managed and overseen by a Governance Board comprising of the University of Lincoln (Arts Council grant applicant), City of Lincoln Council, Lincoln BIG, Visit Lincoln and Zest Theatre.
- A long-term outcome is to start the journey to City of Culture 2029 application.

As a result of the discussions between Members and Sukhy Johal and Toby Ealden, the following points were made: -

- Policy changes were needed to consider mental health issues, preventing the need for expenditure ahead. In doing this, there needed to be a focus at looking at health in culture.
- With an ever-changing society, the difficulties in engaging with young people could be broken down by considering how things could be done better. Using social media as an example, the consideration of how this could be used as a place making tool. It was considered that young people were asked infrequently how they thought and felt and for their own opinion so this would highlight the power of face-to-face delivery.
- Issues around accessibility and inclusion were raised and the Committee was assured that these were primary considerations when engaging with young people to ensure there were no voices left unheard.
- Regular updates would be provided to the Committee at appropriate intervals to keep Committee updated and engaged along the journey.
- It was hoped that the maxims would be ready for committee consideration in February or March 2022 and details on the symposium would be towards the end of next year.
- Consideration into the digital side of the creative sector was not always common despite approximately 2/3 of the finance, approximately £100 billion being within the sector.
- The element of play is very important, and individuals lose this as they age. Experiential learning is something that engages people at all levels.

- There was a cultural difference between local people and the University and to bridge that gap, events could be published and circulated via social media with notice given so the word could be spread. It was advised that the University takes its civic responsibility seriously and wished to lean into the city, not away from it.
- When considering the more deprived areas of the City such as St. Giles and the Ermine, putting on an event in parks in these areas would give communities something to look forward to. Comparisons could be drawn from the post-industrial town of Stockton on Tees, and how they were regenerating their town centre.
- There were many avenues a cultural consortium could reach, and these could include things less traditionally associated with culture, for example sculpture. By giving a cohort somewhere to go, you give an empowerment in being seen and heard in a space.

The Chair thanked Simon Walters, Sukhy Johal and Toby Ealden for their attendance and contributions to the discussion and for their inspiring presentation.

8. Work Programme 2021/22

Consideration was given to the Committee's work programme. The Democratic Services and Elections Manager advised that none of the key contributors for the Committee's next topic on giving young people a voice on how they engage with the Council were able to attend the meeting in November.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Committee's meeting in November be cancelled.

The Chair advised that any contributors unable to attend the meeting of the Committee in December should be included in the meeting schedule for 25 January 2022.

Discussion took place regarding presentation of health statistics. Simon Walters, Director for Communities and Environment explained the item could be brought before the Committee in March 2022. The Chair confirmed and gave instruction to remove it from the work programme for the Policy Scrutiny Committee and to add it to the work programme for the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee for March 2022.