



MINUTES LONDON AREA COUNCIL

Date	Thursday 2 March 2023
Time	10:00-12:40
Location	MS Teams – online meeting
Area Council	David Bryan CBE, (Chair) Angie Bual, Victoria Dela Amedume, MBE, Shawab Iqbal, Stella Kanu, Lucy Kennedy, Paulette Long, OBE, Thomas Ryalls, Imran Sanaullah, MBE, Justine Simons, OBE, Matt Steinberg
Apologies	Cllr Andreas Kirsch, Cllr Darren Rodwell, Cllr Emma Will
Arts Council	Darren Henley, CBE, CEO; Tonya Nelson, London Area Director; Cate Canniffe, Neil Darlison, Theatre Director; Teresa Drew, minute-taker; Claire Mera-Nelson, Music Director; Sabine Unamun, London Director; Natalie Jones, Head of Advocacy and Comms; Heidi Mayhew, Senior Operations Manager

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Cllr Rodwell, Cllr Kirsch, and Cllr Will. The Chair then invited all the members to introduce themselves to new member, Victoria Dela Amedume.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 The Chair declared an interest in Creative Lives mentioned in the ED/AD report under the Know Your Neighbourhood Strand I update.
- 2.2 Everyone to keep their conflicts of interest up to date by contacting the PA to the Area Director with any changes.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 6 DECEMBER 2022

- 3.1 The minutes were approved. There were no matters arising.

4. OVERVIEW OF LONDON AREA COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

The Chair outlined his thoughts to date on areas of emerging and ongoing priorities for London Area Council by building on the Arts Council's expertise, and by partnership working. London is uniquely positioned as a global city with great diversity of its population. The following points were made:

- Following on from Rosetta Arts presenting to members at the December 2022 meeting, the Chair wishes to continue to do this at meetings so Area Council members get to see examples of best practice across the sector.



- Collaboration with other agencies: the Chair would like to build ideas together with other agencies to produce the best thought leadership for the sector.
- Using the intelligence that we garner from all the data we possess, to input into our thinking and assessments.
- Apprenticeships: the Chair is keen to build on what is already in place, and consider best practice.
- Employment: the Chair identified a need to develop a long-term view with a more strategic pipeline for talent development.
- Place-making: the Chair is keen to nurture places to develop local vitality and purpose. Post-Covid the landscape has changed and while the current work in the five Priority boroughs is a secure baseline for growth, the future is unknown.

[Abid Hussain and Colette Cork-Hurst joined the meeting.]

5. EQUALITY ANALYSIS ACTION PLAN

Abid Hussain introduced the item and went through some headline points. The meeting touched upon the following range of comments and points to consider and discuss:

- The challenge of the data is to successfully analyse it to use it to support each of our five Areas, as each Area is unique.
- The Arts Council ran the Equality Analysis, then took time for reflection, and following that has now produced this Action Plan.
- It is limited in scope but it is complementary to our Delivery Plan and synergises with some of our programmes.
- Noted that wider policy and development plans are needed.
- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion feedback generally is welcome.
- London Area: noted that there are lots of opportunities in London, but there are challenges too - such as loss of funding. London has a major role in diversity for the whole organisation.
- Especial thanks go to Race Advisory Group and Disability Advisory Group for their pertinent and timely challenges and feedback.
- Disability: very clear that we need progress both nationally and in our five Areas, as well as across programming, workforce, audiences, and governance.
- After Action Review (AAR) of the Investment Process: RAG and DAG have already provided feedback. We will reflect on our processes, systems, guidance, and advice and take the learning for the next NPO process in 2025.
- Elevate Funding Programme: we will confirm Elevate Round 3. To support unsuccessful applicants the plan is to set up an alumni network and establish peer to peer support across Area boundaries.



- Census: there is a huge amount of Census data. There are some tensions that will need to be analysed.
- The Action Plan goes to National Council once all the Area Councils have been consulted. It will be a publicly available document. The main point however is that we want our investment to tell the story.
- London disabled-led applications to join the National Portfolio were low, however, other organisations did provide routes for disabled artists so we need to consolidate that and view this as a network. London has a pipeline of organisations that want to join the National Portfolio. We want to ensure our new joiners 23+ succeed. We do not know Arts Council's future funding levels so they will have to be resilient to be able, in time, to compete with existing larger organisations and develop their capacity to deliver. Jen Cleary, Director, Combined Arts, and London Area Director both noted the lack of diversity in leadership in the festival sector and in art centres. London has lots of places that we could use to develop that pipeline of people for leadership roles in organisations across England. Also, in the outer London boroughs we find more organisations led by people from a lower socio-economic background than is generally the case in the arts and culture sector.
- After the Action Plan is published it will be refined and more detail added in the future. We will have key measures of success (key performance indicators).
- Protected characteristics: while sexual orientation and faith/belief are protected characteristics these were not used as balancing criteria for decisions on the National Portfolio last year. The 'culture wars' present a challenging landscape, so we need to consider our approach.
- Currently the Arts Council has no formal rationale on what protected characteristics it collects data on, and those it does not.

Action: Abid Hussain is open to further discussion around this.

- Talent pipeline: the meeting wanted to know how this work would intersect with work on participation for CYP. There is lack of data on CYP participation. The meeting wanted to see interplay/link across these strands of work.
- Statistics on disabled artists and organisations led by people with disabilities: the meeting noted that the Disability Advisory Group (DAG) felt heard by the Arts Council and thanked Abid Hussain. The meeting was informed that the DAG is seeking to convene a working group of disabled leaders. The Group wants to see visibility of disabled people at higher echelons across the sector, not just at entry level posts, as it was felt there is some evidence that people with a disability do not disclose it. The Group would like to spotlight leaders doing great work and showcase key players in the sector with disabilities. The



Group is open to any support and/or guidance that can be provided by Arts Council staff.

Action: Abid Hussain will introduce Tom Ryalls to Hollie Smith-Charles, Director, Creative Health and Change Programmes, who is leading on transforming governance.

- Intersectionality: the meeting wanted a clearer picture of intersectionality. Abid explained that response rates differed across the characteristics, making it difficult to obtain a clear picture around intersectionality.

The Chair rounded off the discussion with the following comments:

- We need to promote all the good stories of what we are doing/achieving.
- We must show our progress so people can see that our intent is being met with action so they can feel confident.
- Financial challenges: ticket sales are complex now, so there is a need to consider the financial mix for organisations and see how this can be recalibrated to meet circumstances. Some financial challenges remain hidden.
- This is a beneficial process, and we are addressing all concerns.

[Abid and Colette left the meeting.]

[Emmie Kell joined the meeting.]

6. MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL PROPERTY

Emmie took the meeting through a presentation, the aim of which being:

- To familiarise Area Council with the work of Museums and Cultural Property team and demonstrate its impact.
- To share some headlines about the new National Portfolio and what this means for our delivery of Let's Create.
- To reflect on insights from the sector.
- To highlight where there are strategic challenges and opportunities.

The meeting covered the following:

- Government Indemnity Scheme: this makes exhibitions happen as there is no need for commercial insurance. It is both sustainable and affordable.
- Desire to see collections/objects in public ownership.
- Discussion points: who decides what ends up in our museums? Who decides what is important?
- Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND): is an open-access capital fund for non-national Accredited museums and local authorities for vital infrastructure and urgent maintenance back-logs beyond the scope of day to day maintenance budgets.



- Responsibility for innovation and improvement of museums used to sit with the Museums, Libraries, and Archives Council (closed in 2012) but 11 years ago this work was integrated into the Arts Council England. So, historically, the sector is more familiar with the National Lottery Heritage Fund than with Arts Council England.
- The whole system, 'how it works', is to deliver to and against the Arts Council's Inclusivity and Relevance Investment Principle.
- Museum development funding – how Arts Council supports museums – every borough in England. Then, they can go for accreditation.
- Collections at risk: local and meaningful solutions to 'place distinctiveness' that matters to people in their local area.
- The Museums and Cultural Property team is working with Abid Hussain and Colette Cork-Hurst on Diversity and Inclusion.
- Commercial sector: there is considerable overlap with work done in the commercial sector, and Emmie explained the team is going to do research on this next year to develop a good working relationship (as the Literature team does with commercial publishers).
- London has many museums funded directly from DCMS. However, in the outer London boroughs there are smaller museums that can be flexible and open to innovation that in turn can influence the bigger National Museums. The aim and desire is to support that ecology in London.
- Paulette Long invited Emmie Kell to attend a Race Advisory Group meeting. Learning and information sharing to increase diversity in this area.

Action: Chair noted that there are many issues that need understanding in the museums sector and requested that this comes back onto a future agenda for Area Council. He felt it important that Area Council understand the current debates around museums and their collections to contribute to the discussion.

Action: Teresa Drew to circulate the slides after the meeting.

7. FUNDING AGREEMENTS UPDATE

- 7.1 The Area Director provided the meeting with a verbal update on the ongoing negotiations around Funding Agreements for organisations due to be in the National Portfolio 2023-2026. The Arts Council is aware that the financial landscape has changed since organisations submitted their applications in 2022 and that a consequence of this could be a reduction in activity delivered by some organisations.
- 7.2 Area Council members wanted to know more about the investment challenges as well as the plans of those organisations transitioning out of the Portfolio. Particular concern was expressed regarding the impact on: CYP; new writing for the stage;



loss of experimental work in favour of more commercial options; women in theatre; and, touring.

Action: further discussion at the London Area Council meeting on 16 May 2023 when the Arts Council will have an analysis of the final Portfolio and the Elements to inform a discussion around provision.

8. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S AND AREA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

8.1 The Area Director introduced the report, and Area Council members noted the contents. The Area Director drew the meeting's attention to the item on the development of an access scheme for disabled audience members, as well as the work of Faye Stewart, recently appointed internal Access Change Maker, who has plans to support wider culture change internally to help foster a more inclusive and accessible environment for disabled staff.

8.2 Remuneration for self-employed members of Area Councils
Executive Board recognise the time commitment is challenging in particular for freelancers who often have to give up earning opportunities to attend Arts Council meetings. Arts Council England is considering how best it can recognise their time within its capped admin budgets. Executive Board is therefore seeking the views of Area Councils and would welcome members' feedback on this matter. Members commented as follows:

- The meeting endorsed such payments as best practice and showing leadership to the sector where organisations can afford to pay their board members. Noted that the GLA already has this as part of its terms and conditions for non-executive positions.
- The meeting noted that it can make it easier for to claim access to work support payments where a non-executive role is remunerated.

8.3 Update on approach to NPO risk monitoring and intervention

The Area Director explained that the Arts Council was changing its way of working to allow more time for development work by reducing the amount of time staff spending on monitoring. Area Council raised two points:

- Some organisations are going to need to set up a new governance structure to meet the reporting requirements.
- Trustees often sit on multiple boards. For example, it is common for those in the sector with disabilities to be invited to sit on many boards. This often creates clashes with boards meeting around the same time to meet the Arts Council cycle for reporting.

8.3 Area Council members noted the risk report.



- 8.4 **Action:** The PA to the Area Director will be in touch with members to find a time to meet later in March for Area Council members' feedback on the NPO process. The Area Director has provided a set of questions to shape this discussion.

9. RACE ADVISORY GROUP AND DISABILITY ADVISORY GROUP UPDATES

- 9.1 The Race Advisory Group (RAG) is waiting on further updates on the Arts Council's internal Inclusion Review which is now underway.
- 9.2 The RAG is considering succession planning as there is churn in membership.
- 9.3 Noted that the RAG is robust and has made change happen. The Chair added that we must make the case for all the progress made with diversity and how it is manifesting in opportunities and change. The Area Director added that a comms plan is being developed that will tell the positive story on what the Arts Council has and continues to achieve.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 10.1 Chalo novation: noted by Area Council.
- 10.2 The Chair encouraged members to go out to see work. There will be time on future Area Council agendas for a short update from everyone on what work they have seen. Members can claim the cost of tickets on expenses.
- 10.3 The meeting requested a strategic discussion on support for individual artists at a future meeting.

The meeting closed: 12:42