

Minutes

SE Area Council

Date: Thursday 17 February 2022

Time: 10:00 – 13:30

Location: **Via Microsoft Teams**

Attendees: Prof. Roni Brown (Chair), Cllr Alan Waters, Bruce Leeke, Celia Davies, Cllr Daniel Schumann, Gurvinder Sandher, Cllr Jacqui Burnett, Kate Adams, Paul Stacey, Sho Shibata
Apologies: Louise Blackwell, Pamela Roberts, Stephen Crocker

For Arts Council:

Darren Henley, Hazel Edwards, Claire Toogood, Hannah Lake, Natalie Jones, Peter Heslip

Apologies: Glyn Huelin

Chair: Prof. Roni Brown

Guests:

Notes: Megan Hogg

1. Welcome and apologies

- The Chair noted apologies and welcomed new members Paul Stacey and Bruce Leeke, Hannah Lake who started as Interim Cambridge Director in January 2022, and ACE staff.

1.1 Declarations of Interest

- Reminder to review the Declarations of Interest and send to Megan Hogg.

2. NPO 23+

Presentation from Hazel Edwards and Darren Henley

Questions and comments from Area Council members:

- Given the South East's proximity to London we must be mindful of the disproportionate effects of organisations moving out of London to other areas and the impact on existing organisations and cultural ecologies.
- A council member questioned the new diverse NPOs coming in at Band 1. Hazel Edwards responded that the Arts Council is working with Abid Hussain, Director of Diversity, to look at existing diverse led NPOs and have developed a sonar to track potential NPOs. SE Area want to see more diverse led organisations enter the portfolio and those existing diverse-led NPOs perform at a higher level.
- A council member gave their recent personal experience of having a mandatory introductory conversation. Hazel Edwards suggested a conversation outside of the meeting to gather feedback.
- A council member commented that the Arts Council has welcomed NPOs out of London before and suggested looking at the infrastructure in place to support London NPOs in their potential new locations. They noted that there can be challenges engaging with local artists.
- A council member noted that the spreadsheet of outcomes activity file (in the application) was too big to edit. They have sent feedback to a Relationship Manager.
- A council member commented that the mandatory introductory conversations for new NPOs needs to be candid and provide an indication of how organisations can improve. Hazel Edwards responded that the Arts Council would expect organisations to have discussed this with Relationship

Managers before application to become an NPO. Introductory conversations were scripted to ensure fairness and consistency.

- A council member asked if there is any negotiation with the organisation if a lower funding figure is offered. Hazel Edwards responded that there would be discussions with the organisation about reducing activity to fit a smaller investment in the period November 2022 to February 2023.
- A council member noted a need for explicit guidance on Arts Council England's definition of diverse led, including the percentage of diverse leadership required, as neurodiversity is not specified. They also commented that Developing Your Creative Practice grants are difficult for artists without a bank account or advocates to apply on their behalf. Hazel Edwards responded that she will discuss this with the Investment Centre to clarify existing guidance and suggested further discussion with the council member offline.
- A council member asked how networked potential IPSOs are expected to be, and whether they require evidence of change making practice, or if an application is measured on ambition and vision. Hazel Edwards confirmed it is the ambition presented in the application.
- A council member questioned whether the rise in cost of living and inflation is considered when assessing diverse-led NPO applications. Hazel Edwards commented there is an annual report on Equality, Diversity and Creative Case for Diversity for 20/21 due in March which will be presented at the Race and Disability Advisory Groups. Data such as this will be considered for decisions on existing NPOs, in addition to information on the application forms. Darren Henley commented that new NPOs should apply for the right amount of funding and will be awarded appropriate funding.

3. Race and Disability Advisory Group Updates

Hazel Edwards reported on behalf of Laura Dyer, information also in the Executive Director's report.

- Simon Mellor attended both groups which discussed the NPO 23+ process and the members' role in decision making. Both Groups offered views on how both high performing existing NPOs and new entrants can be supported. Terry Adams is supporting at a local level for the South East and is keen to see flagship NPOs in the South East having impact nationally.
- Equality, Diversity and Creative Case Report for 2020/21 will be published in March 2022.
- A presentation on a UK wide access scheme for disabled audience members was delivered to DAG members.

- There will be a joint RAG and DAG meeting in 2022.
- A council member commented that DAG diverse led guidance on the Arts Council's website does not include reference to neurodiversity which needs addressing. The Chair suggested the council member meet with Andrew Miller. Hazel Edwards suggested this meeting include Peter Heslip who is supporting neurodiverse Arts Council England colleagues.
- A council member noted they attended the RAG meeting in January. They reported positive feedback including significant support and evidence that diverse-led NPOs are 'thriving not surviving'. The council member was pleased to see commitment from the Arts Council and welcomed the comment to include neurodiversity.

4. SE Area Plan

Presentation from Hazel Edwards, Hannah Lake and Claire Toogood

Questions and comments from Area Council members:

- A council member commented that the plan was exciting and realistic over two years. The CYP strategy will ensure representation of disability and socio-economic background amongst children and young people.
- A council member asked for the council members' experiences to be included, noting they are keen to support with experience in connecting art and sports. Hazel Edwards noted that she and Darren Henley met with Sport England, another arm's length body funded by DCMS, that the Arts Council is working with. Darren Henley noted there are good opportunities to work together, and he has regular contact with his Sport England counterpart.
- A council member raised concern about the vocabulary used around neurodiversity, and to include young people in care and those transitioning from care.
- A council member noted concern that 'children and young people' does not include parents, who are crucial to children's involvement. They also voiced concern that the CYP strategy include peripatetic music for 11yrs and over who do not receive it in schools. Claire Toogood noted that discussions are ongoing regarding Music Education Hubs. The strategy provides an opportunity to work with the youth sector in different ways, not just through schools. This will be made more explicit in the strategy.
- A council member commented that it is pertinent to fill any gaps left by Bridge organisations. Claire Toogood noted that this was identified in the SWOT analysis, and she has had the opportunity for conversations with

those organisations. The CYP strategy is a chance for shared working across organisations.

- The Chair suggested circulating the presentation from the informal meeting to council members to read before the next meeting in May.

5. Chair's Report and Members' Updates

5.1 SE Area Council Member Extensions

- The National Council approved the requested extensions for Louise Blackwell, Celia Davies, Stephen Crocker and Kate Adams to provide consistency throughout the NPO process.
- The Chair announced the ratification by National Council of two new South East Area Council members - Cllr Victoria Harvey and Cllr Michael Gbadebo.

5.2 Future SE Area Council Recruitment

- The Chair will be in contact with those council members whose terms of office are coming to an end.
- The Chair announced that Louise Blackwell will take over from Cllr Alan Waters as deputy chair, as a Councillor is not allowed to deputise during the NPO process.

6. Executive Director's Update

- Nothing additional reported

6.1 Area Director's Update

- Project Art Works, run by council member Kate Adams, has been nominated for the Turner Prize 2021. The council passed on their congratulations.
- Firstsite in Colchester has been awarded Museum of the Year 2021.
- Credit to Peter Heslip as Arts Council England Director of Visual Arts.
- Reported the successful webinar with SE Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) on their Creative High Streets report, chaired by Hazel Edwards and Sarah Dance, SELEP Deputy Chair, with over 200 attendees.

6.2 Risk Report

Hazel Edwards reported on behalf of Glyn Huelin.

- Reported 61 out of 104 NPOs have a minor risk, 35 moderate and 6 major risk. Area Council were updated on risk.
- Noted that the South East's management of risk has improved with higher quality risk reports and risks being proactively managed by SRMs/RMs with support from Directors.

- A council member asked if there are goals NPOs on the risk register need to obtain before they are awarded further investment. Hazel Edwards confirmed that this is the case and explained that the recent extension funding for 2022/23 considered financial risk and progress with Inclusivity and Relevance. A risk rating will also be part of the NPO 23+ assessment. The highest risk rating in the South East is 10 out of a possible 12, at which point the Executive Board would oversee the process.

7. Minutes of the last meeting

- Please send amendments from the last meeting on 2 September 2021 to Megan Hogg.
- There are no minutes from the informal meeting on 30 November 2021.

8. AOB

- The Chair announced a commitment to the next meeting being in person with informal networking time.
- A council member noted that the National and Area Council away day in November 2021 was postponed but no news whether it is a postponement or a cancellation. Darren Henley apologised and noted that an away day in 2022 was unlikely due to the NPO process.
- A council member questioned whether the Arts Council was engaging with apprenticeships as diversity is low in the arts sector. Darren Henley suggested including a presentation on apprenticeships at a future Area Council meeting.

The next meeting is Monday 9 May

ACTIONS

- Meeting with council member to gather mandatory conversation feedback. – MH to organise
- Meeting with council member on the inclusion of neurodiversity in NPO 23+ guidance and the Disability Advisory Group. – MH to organise
- Circulate the Area Plan presentation and presentation from the informal meeting to council members prior to the next meeting. – MH
- Include presentation on apprenticeships at future Area Council meeting. – MH to organise



