

CREATIVE DARLINGTON BOARD

Monday 6 February 2017 at 2.00pm
Town Hall, Darlington

MINUTES

Present:

Eileen Atkins

Caitlin Barratt

Ada Burns

Laura Case

Caroline Darnbrook

John Dean

Chris Lloyd

Sharon Paterson (chaired meeting)

Ian Robinson

Miranda Thain

Councillor Nick Wallis

Stephen Wiper

Councillor Carson - observer

Apologies:

Ivor Crowther

Seth Pearson

Bill Vince

Lynda Winstanley

1. Minutes of last meeting

1.1 Minutes of the last meeting agreed subject to two corrections, apologies from Seth Pearson to be changed from Theatre Hullaballoon to The Hullaballoon. .

1.2 **Action 1:** Stephen Wiper to amend minutes.

2. Culture by Numbers

2.1 A paper was presented showing headline information gathered from various sources for presentation within two pages of the March 2017 edition of One Darlington magazine under the Culture by Numbers heading. The information shows how various organisations, creative enterprises and services are delivering and supporting an active arts scene, securing over 200,000 visits in 2016 and assisting place promotion of Darlington. All those who contributed information were thanked. The meeting noted the opportunity to recognise key parties within the arts scene through the Best of Darlington awards.

2.2 **Action 2:** Stephen Wiper to amend visual arts data to focus on exhibition attendance in 2016.

2.3 **Action 3:** Opportunity to recognise Contribution to the Arts within the Best of Darlington Awards 2017 <http://www.onedarlington.org.uk/best-of-darlington/>

3 Durham Music Service

- 3.1 Ian Robinson from Durham Music Service gave a presentation on the work of Durham Music Service in Darlington. Durham Music Service is the music hub working with children in County Durham and Darlington. Ian advised re the scope of their work, the number of ensembles based in or engaging children from Darlington, and how Durham Music Service has led on the development of various programme in Darlington in recent years contributing to a vibrant and diverse arts offer, including the development of Darlington Jazz Festival over several years, and bringing the Hallé orchestra to work in Darlington schools and perform at the Dolphin Centre in 2016. Ian welcomed the role parties including Darlington Building Society and Creative Darlington had undertaken is supporting their work.
- 3.2 Ian also advised that an original piece of music is being composed with primaries by nationally renowned Jazz Musician Matt Roberts as part of Darlington Jazz festival, with workshops being held at the Head of Steam railway museum and a gala concert planned for September 2017 at Locomotion in Shildon to celebrate their work.
- 3.3 Creative Darlington supported a performance by National Youth Jazz Orchestra with Durham Music Service in Central Hall, Darlington in 2016. Ian advised NYJO are interested in developing their work in the North East going forward and may be considering the development of regional hubs, which might present opportunities for further County Durham and Darlington involvement.

4 Theatre Hullabaloo

- 4.1 Miranda Thain, Creative Producer of Theatre Hullabaloo, gave a presentation to the board around their current activity and development work. The Hullaballoon, is already being recognised as a national centre of excellence and will include a 150 seat theatre, a 150 seat studio theatre, a family café, creative play spaces plus rehearsal and office space for the organisation. It will be the only dedicated venue of its kind north of London, a distinct asset for Darlington, and a powerhouse in the production of theatre for young audiences. As a purpose built venue with a range of opportunities to explore, play, pop in and go on a creative journey, The Hullaballoon presents opportunities for Theatre Hullabaloo to build on their work to date with children and young people and families in Darlington and to encourage creative engagement and to develop audiences. Children and young people have been actively involved in the development of The Hullaballoon as a place for them.
- 4.2 The presentation included the ways in which Theatre Hullabaloo currently engage with children and young people, including those within small rural schools. While construction of The Hullaballoon immersive productions like Spirits of the Sea are being shared in Darlington and Tiny Treasures, a new play commissioned to raise awareness of the existence of young carers and the issues they face, is being shared widely (including Northern Stage and

The Witham). Work is being undertaken and proposals developed for communities in Darlington, including those around Red Hall and Mount Pleasant schools and Theatre Hullabaloo is engaged with particular universities to progress research.

- 4.3 Miranda is currently contributing to North East Cultural Partnership's strategic work around children and young people. The TakeOff Festival is England's leading festival of theatre for children and young people and is approaching its thirtieth year, with activity around County Durham and Darlington.
- 4.4 Board discussion noted the achievements of Theatre Hullabaloo in creating work which puts the young person at the heart of the creative process and the value of their advocacy for the belief that children and young people have an entitlement to theatre of the highest quality which inspires the imagination and challenges the mind.
- 4.5 The Creative Darlington Manager advised the board that Darlington Borough Council has confirmed budget to support Theatre Hullabaloo's work in Darlington in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 subject to an annual agreement.
- 4.6 **Action 4:** Progress agreement for Darlington Borough Council support for Theatre Hullabaloo in 2017/18 – Laura Case, Miranda Thain, Stephen Wiper

5. Civic Theatre/Hippodrome presentation

- 5.1 Caitlin Barratt, Heritage Learning and Engagement Officer for Darlington Civic Theatre/Hippodrome gave a presentation on their work with children and young people and the activity she is developing since taking up this new role in Darlington.
- 5.2 The Civic Theatre has an established Artspark programme and the Hippodrome will incorporate an education hub for this and work around the heritage of theatre in Darlington. Work to date has included building links with schools partnerships, developing and piloting with Darlington schools discovery boxes themed around theatre heritage, shaped in part by science, technology, engineering and mathematics within the curriculum.
- 5.3 The heritage programme includes family open days, regular talks and events. The restored Civic re-opening as The Hippodrome will house a variety of exhibition spaces (including a heritage exhibition space and another exhibition space focused on children and young people's work) and links are being made with partners including Cleveland College of Arts and Design around programme development. The Civic/Hippodrome is also connecting with various partners to explore volunteering, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.

6 Culture Bridge North East

- 6.1 Eileen Atkins gave a presentation on the work and role of Culture Bridge North East, including the national, regional, Tees Valley and local context of their work, government commitment to cultural entitlement for children and young people and the impact of deprivation on cultural engagement and educational attainment were considered. Arts Council England's Cultural Education Challenge - calling for the art, culture and education sectors to work together in offering a consistent and high quality art and cultural education for all children and young people informs the work of Culture Bridge North East. The presentation and discussion noted the significance of LSEP's as an emerging mechanism to encourage engagement between the cultural sector and those working in education.

7 Discussion – how should we work together to benefit children and young people in the borough?

- 7.1 The discussion recognised the significant cultural capacity housed in Darlington and opportunities for cultural engagement to make a positive contribution across Every Child Matters priorities here, particularly once The Hullaballoon opens.

Discussion considered how easy it was for children and young people to engage with and become aware of the breadth and quality of cultural opportunities in Darlington, and whether access was equal.

Passport schemes to cultural engagement were referenced and the value of access to forums for senior management from schools and colleges.

Tees Valley wide LSEP first met in October 2016 and is expected to meet again in April 2017. The board noted opportunities for Darlington to engage more fully in shaping the Tees Valley LSEP agenda.

Discussion considered opportunities for culture to shape Darlington's emerging Strategy for Children and Young People and recognised the importance of bespoke programmes to progressing the Cultural Education Challenge.

Discussion noted the importance of current intelligence around volunteering, apprenticeship and skills development opportunities for children and young people.

Discussion noted the importance of early engagement in cultural opportunities and the value of research which can inform future commissioning of services.

8 Commissioning

- 8.1 Creative Darlington is organising a half day meeting between those commissioning services for children and young people in Darlington and those providing cultural services, including organisation in Darlington, Tees Valley and the North East. The meeting will run between 2pm and 5pm on

Wednesday 14 June 2017.

9. Creative Darlington brand

9.1 The board considered a paper around the Creative Darlington brand and whether to update the Creative Darlington website to reflect extension of remit to include arts and heritage and reflect Darlington's emerging Culture Strategy (currently in consultation).

9.2 **Action 5:** Stephen Wiper to co-ordinate board photograph for Creative Darlington to reflect new membership and to invite board members to submit description of their engagement with Creative Darlington, and may show particular interests of their organisation/business regarding the Creative Darlington vision, the arts and heritage and Darlington (c. 200 words can include links).

10 Any Other Business

No any other business was declared.