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| Date | Wednesday 12 July 2023 |
| Time | 11.00 am – 2.30 pm |
| Location | Phoenix, 4 Midland Street, Leicester LE1 1TG |
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| Present | Sukhy Johal, Emily Bowman, Pawlet Brookes, Cllr Abi Brown, Parminder Dosanjh, Ayub Khan, Jaivant Patel.  Virtual: Julie Finch, Cllr John Reynolds, Tanya Raabe-Webber (Plus PA Jackie Cooley)  Peter Knott, Rebecca Blackman, Maureen Gaynor, Sharon Joinson, Mark Done, Thomas Wildish, Liz Johnson, Laura Dyer |
| Apologies | Cllr Jayne Francis, Pippa Frith, Cllr Barry Lewis, Jennifer McKie, Hugh James, Kathy Fawcett, Simon Fitch, Sarah Kennedy, Toby Norman-Wright, Harinder Matharu |
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**Notes**

**Midlands Area Council Meeting**

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| 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES   1.1 The chair welcomed Council Members and Management Team to the meeting.  1.2 Apologies were noted as above. |  |
| 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST   2.1 The chair explained that the full Declarations of Interest register is circulated for every meeting and members are required to keep their declarations up to date.  2.2 The Declarations of Interest paper was circulated amongst members for any updates. |  |
| |  | | --- | | 1. **10 YEARS OF CPP – A NATIONAL AND AREA OVERVIEW**   3.1 Rebecca Blackman gave a presentation on the Creative People and Places programme giving members an overview of the 10 years it has been in existence. She said the key thing she wanted to highlight is that there are two distinct strands of learning. The learning for partners and the communities delivering in place, and the learning for the Arts Council in terms of approach and policy.  3.3 Mark Done talked about the projects covering 15 local authority places in the Midlands in order to highlight some approaches by Midlands CPPs.  3.4 Rebecca said that National Council has agreed to support the next national portfolio round of CPP and that there is a wider range of places eligible. This will go live in September with the portal opening in December.  3.5 CPP will return to a later Area Council meeting to update members on the 2025-28 funding programme. | | 1. **INCLUSION REVIEW**   4.1 Laura Dyer presented the headline findings and recommendations from the Nous Group, who had been commissioned to conduct an independent review of Arts Council’s employment policies and processes, practices, and culture in relation to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). The review examines the Arts Council’s effectiveness as an employer in relation to staff  colleagues’ experiences and the Arts Council’s non-executive governance. The review explores these across all protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 and in relation to socioeconomic background. This review follows substantial work from staff colleagues at the Arts Council and efforts from  leaders to help make the Arts Council a more equal, inclusive,  and diverse workplace.  4.2 Methodology included an all-staff survey, online one-to-one consultations and online self-organised group consultations.    4.3 Members were informed that the report was still to be communicated to staff after which it would be sent to Area Council. The report will be published in the summer.  4.3 Laura asked for her gratitude for the additional work by members of the RAG and DAG groups and the staff reference group to be noted. | | *Members were given a tour of Phoenix hosted by John Rance, Chief Executive Officer and Irina Tsokova, Arts Manager.* | | 1. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S UPDATE/AREA DIRECTOR’S UPDATE   5.1 Laura and Peter spoke to the Executive Director and Area Director report which included an update on Music Education Hubs, key headlines from the Race and Disability Advisory Group meetings, Coventry UK City of Culture National Audit Office review, the Government Indemnity Scheme, Museums at Risk, the NHS 75th Anniversary project, and the Associate Schools Programme, with additional information as follows.  5.2 Peter Knott referred to the update on Coventry UK City of Culture and informed members that the National Audit Office (NAO) has confirmed that it will be undertaking a review of public funding provided to Coventry City of Culture. Staff in the Midlands Area and Investment Centre teams have been supporting the NAO in its work. He also asked for thanks to be noted for Simon Fitch and the wider team for their hard work and support for Coventry through this process.    5.3 Peter talked about the item on Museums at Risk. The result of the pandemic and ongoing financial pressures has put museums in very challenging situations with some already identifying themselves to our Museum Development partners as ‘at risk of closure’ and being included on the national ACE/DCMS risk register.   * 1. 5.4 Peter said we were looking into the reasons for this. A factor in many of the Midlands’ cases is reduced local authority funding/lack of local authority support or a change to service provision by a local authority that was arguably driven by financial agendas.   2. 5.5 Members discussed the possibility of a future agenda item looking at the museum landscape. Liz Johnson agreed to action this supporting Kathy Fawcett as the lead.   5.6 Museums at Risk to be brought to a future Midlands Area Council meeting.  5.7 Members reviewed the risk reports.  5.8 There was a discussion around risk in the sector. Members were concerned about several aspects including the introduction of charges for attending festivals and carnivals, levels of stress for peer leaders around ticket sales, different impacts on different industries, concern for bigger venues’ utility costs, the constant battle for touring companies trying to break even to get work out there, and the impact on independent organisations and freelancers.  5.9 The Chair said that we need a further discussion around risk and what members are hearing at a future meeting.  5.10 Risk in the sector to be brought to a future Midlands Area Council meeting. | | 1. CHAIR’S UPDATE   6.1 The Chair said that he was conscious of some members needing to meet remotely, whilst there was also a desire to meet in person. He was concerned IT did not always meet the needs of this hybrid format and will think about the best way forward. In the meantime, he asked members to protect the dates of meetings as much as possible. | | 7. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE AREA COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2023  7.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2023 were agreed as an accurate record.  7.2 There were no matters arising. | |  |
| 1. ANY OTHER BUSINESS    1. There was no other business. |  |
| 1. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**   **2023**   * Friday 29 September * Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 November (AC/NC Away Day)   **2024**   * Wednesday 6 March |  |