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| Date | Friday 9 December 2022 |
| Time | 11.30 am – 2.00 pm |
| Location | Room 1, Arts Council England, 82 Granville Street, Birmingham B1 2LH/Microsoft Teams |
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| Present | Sukhy Johal (Chair), Pawlet Brookes, Julie Finch, Pippa Frith, Ayub Khan,  Jaivant Patel, Cllr John Reynolds, Peter Knott, Laura Dyer, Rebecca Blackman, Liz Johnson, Kathy Fawcett, Maureen Gaynor, Sue Elwell, Sharon Joinson, Sarah Kennedy, Toby Norman-Wright, Harinder Matharu  By MS Teams: Jennifer McKie, Tanya Raabe-Webber (plus PA Jackie Cooley) |
| Apologies | Emily Bowman, Cllr Abi Brown, Cllr Barry Lewis, Gary Topp, Simon Fitch, Tom Wildish, Hugh James, Mark Done |
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**Notes**

**Midlands Area Council Meeting**

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|  | WELCOME AND APOLOGIES  1.1 The chair welcomed Council Members and Management Team to the meeting.  1.2 Apologies were noted from Emily Bowman, Cllr Abi Brown, Cllr Barry Lewis, Gary Topp, Simon Fitch, Tom Wildish, Hugh James and Mark Done. |  |
| 2. | 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 No conflicts of interest were declared at the meeting. |  |
| 3. | CHAIR’S UPDATE  3.1 The Chair explained that there were no minutes at the meeting as the October 7th minutes were approved electronically. He thanked members for doing this.  3.2 The Chair informed members that we were still missing a few responses to the diversity survey of Area Council members, and he reminded members that this needs to be responded to. He also emphasised the importance of the survey. The link will be re-sent to members.  3.3 The Chair asked for thanks to be recorded for the work the staff team and Area Council members had undertaken regarding the NPO process. He said he appreciates that some of the decisions were difficult. A lot of the conversations we have had over the last year as an Area Council have helped to achieve the final outcome which he believes to be a really good outcome. Again, he expressed his gratitude to all. |  |
| 4. | REFLECTIONS ON NPO ACCOUNCEMENT  4.1 Peter introduced this item by informing members that this was an opportunity for us to reflect on the NPO announcement and how this has been received in the Midlands.  4.2 Peter said that he and Sukhy had received a compendium of thank you notes, and the feedback we have had has been mostly very strong. He emphasised that decisions are always made with integrity and based on criteria. Some decisions were difficult, but this does not mean they were wrong. However, in context of some national criticism about London decisions, every day since the announcement, area press coverage has been positive and a lot of what we have achieved has been recognised.  4.3 One member asked for thanks to the Midlands Communications Team to be noted saying that he has had to contact Sharon on several occasions with queries and has received huge support.  4.4 Another member said they would like to acknowledge the work and complexities involved in the NPO process.  4.5 Sharon introduced the presentation on the Investment Programme 2023-26 Midlands Communications press coverage highlights which included press coverage in newspapers, radio and TV broadcast, online articles, op-eds, and social media. This included 58 pieces of print coverage across the Midlands, five TV broadcasts featuring interviews from Peter and Toby, 21 radio broadcasts, 70 online articles and four locally-tailored opinion editorials. |  |
| 5. | **AREA DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE AND RISK REPORT**  5.1 Laura and Peter spoke to the Area Director and Executive Director report which included the Levelling Up and Culture report, Culture Recovery update, Know Your Neighbourhood, Music Hubs update, consultations, press, news and evaluations, and an update on the Birmingham office, a Museums update, and an advocacy and communications 2023-26 investment programme update.  5.2 Laura highlighted the main things for the Arts Council to note in the Levelling Up and Culture Report. She added that the DCMS will be responding to the report in due course, and we will wait to hear what the DCMS wants us to pick up on.  5.3 In reference to the Music Hubs update, Laura said that we were at an early stage of beginning to consult around the three initial options we have developed at the request of the DfE, and in the new year there will be a series of consultations. She said Hannah Fouracre, Director, Music Education is happy to meet any Council members who would like further information or would like to share feedback, risks and opportunities. If there are a significant number of Area Council members across the country interested in having a more detailed conversation, we will arrange for an online drop-in session.  5.4 A few members said that they were very keen to get involved.  5.5 Another membersaid it would be good to find out how we can work more with MEHs across the ecology.  5.6 There was a desire from several members to see the MEHs embedded in our work and linked into the wider NPO portfolio to share ideas, thoughts and work in place.  5.7 Peter updated members on the Birmingham office which has had some refurbishment work done on it recently including renewing the windows throughout and we have sublet the top floor as self-contained office space to Historic England. He said that we have been thinking about how to make the most of our office facilities in Birmingham as we come out of the pandemic. Occupancy is variable and unpredictable, but we are expecting an increase in use from national teams for meetings and events. In addition, we are planning a creative and social programme for 2023 which is aimed at bringing people in and together in the office more regularly.  5.8 Peter presented the Risk Report outlining the organisations that had a risk rating of 9 and above. Members acknowledged its confidentiality. |  |
| **6.** | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  6.1 **Meeting venues**: The Chair said he was wondering if we should have the occasional meeting by MS Teams if we do not have a substantive agenda. There was a general feeling that people preferred in person meetings finding value in the face-to-face experience.  6.2 Whilst this will be taken into consideration for future meetings the Chair stressed that the budget for hiring venues is a lot smaller than it has been previously. One member also added that covid is still not over and that Teams meetings allow safe attendance.  6.3 **Recruitment**: The Chair reminded members that we were planning to recruit to our two vacant local authority places. He invited members to put forward any suggestions for individuals for us to approach. |  |
| **7.** | **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**  **2023**   * Wednesday 1 March * Friday 19 May * Wednesday 12 July * Friday 29 September * Monday 27 November   **2024**   * Wednesday 6 March |  |