

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 SEPTEMBER 2009**

UPDATE ON POLICY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS – ‘A PLACE TO PLAY’

Report of Executive Director of City Services

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP1: Prosperous City; P5: Attractive and Inclusive City

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver ‘One City’.

1. Why has this report come to the Committee?

- 1.1 To update the Committee on progress against the policy review recommendations from the A Place to Play Review

2. Background

- 2.1 During 2008/09, members undertook a policy review, which focussed on music rehearsal and performance spaces in Sunderland. The policy review objectives followed on from the Music Strategy adopted by Cabinet in October 2008.
- 2.2 At the Review Committee in 21 April 2009, the final policy review report was presented, providing a wealth of information to inform and strengthen the local implementation of the Music Strategy.
- 2.3 The report presented 20 recommendations to take forward, all of which would also be incorporated into the action plan of the Music Strategy. It was agreed that quarterly reports would be received from Culture & Tourism.

3. Current position

- 3.1 The following sets out the recommendations, alongside progress to date against each recommendation.

Recommendation 1:

To identify potential sites for poster points in and around the city and also to identify the resources to purchase poster points.

Progress

This issue will be explored through the City Centre Quick Wins initiative.

Recommendation 2:

To undertake research into best practice with regard to the management and maintenance of poster sites.

Progress

Research has been undertaken comparing models in a range of town centres across the country.

Recommendation 3:

To explore the development of a promoter's network for Sunderland including other forms of entertainment like dance and theatre.

Progress

The Arts & Creative Development are currently exploring the development of a Promoters Network

Recommendation 4:

To identify existing and emerging promoters and look to develop support mechanisms within the city for promoters.

Progress

The Arts & Creative Development Team are seeking support from Generator – the regional music agency with regard to supporting existing and emerging promoters. A Training Day has already taken place in Sunderland organised by Generator and supported by the City Council.

Recommendation 5:

To continue to ensure that music plays a prominent part in festivals and flagship events and that relationships with the local music scene are further enhanced.

Progress

The development of a 'fringe' festival to support the recent concerts at the Stadium of Light ensured that a wide range of local musicians were able to showcase their talent.

Recommendation 6:

To support the development of music with both young people, adults and professionals through the development of Arts Centre Washington as a music venue.

Progress

Two initiatives are in progress at Arts Centre Washington to respond to this recommendation: Mix Up – a series of workshops held over the summer holidays for young people aged 13 – 19. Activities included:

- Rehearsal space, recording studio time, master classes and performance opportunities for bands, solo musicians and singers
- Graphic design and printing workshops
- Acting workshops and performances
- Modern dance workshops and performances
- Filmmaking workshops and presentation

Community Music Space – we are awaiting final confirmation that Arts Centre Washington has been successful in securing funding from DCMS for one of ten Community Music Spaces in the country.

Recommendation 7:

To hold discussions with youth development groups to consider the issues around transport for young people to access music events within the city centre.

Progress

This recommendation will be picked up in the autumn.

Recommendation 8:

To identify and develop a Sunderland directory of rehearsal and performance spaces for performers, promoters and audiences.

Progress

Funding has yet to be identified for the development and production of the Directory.

Recommendation 9:

To explore the notion of a centralised ticket sale facility for the city.

Progress

Currently the Tourist Information centre in Fawcett Street can provide this facility to any organisation for a small fee. Funding is currently being sought to develop a computerised Box Office at Arts Centre Washington which would enable tickets to be bought over the internet as well as over the phone.

Recommendation 10:

To raise awareness of the current marketing avenues available to promote music events and to explore a variety of different methods including the use of new technology.

Progress

Organisations have been sign posted to advertise their events on the sunderlandevents.com website. A number of groups are also using Facebook and Myspace to promote their activity.

Recommendation 11:

To raise awareness of existing venues through the development, production and distribution of a Sunderland Music Directory.

Progress

Funding has yet to be identified for the development and production of the Directory.

Recommendation 12:

To continue to explore opportunities for a small to medium sized venue within the current regeneration of the city centre.

Progress

Discussions are ongoing with a number of interested parties regarding refurbishment of existing building and the potential for new build

Recommendation 13:

To raise the profile of the diverse range of music venues currently available in and around Sunderland that already cater for a variety of music genres.

Progress

Venues are encouraged to promote their activity through the sunderlandevents.com website

Recommendation 14:

To develop a venue network for the city that provides support and assists venues in supporting themselves.

Progress

This issue will be picked up in the autumn.

Recommendation 15:

To highlight and signpost Springwell Village Hall as a model of good practice as a local community venue.

Progress

This issue will be picked up in the autumn between the Arts & Creative Development Team and Oxclose and District Young People's Project.

Recommendation 16:

To support the refurbishment of Holy Trinity by the Churches Conservation Trust through partnership working that realises the potential of the venue as a hub of creative activity.

Progress

The Arts & Creative Development Team and other officers of the City Council are supporting the development of the venue as a centre for Creative Activity.

Recommendation 17:

To continue to offer advice, support and information to the University Big Band.

Progress

The Arts & Creative Development Team are supporting the University's application to the Arts Council for funding towards the 2010 festival.

Recommendation 18:

To identify resources within the City Council to address issues identified throughout the review report that will develop the infrastructure required for music to grow and develop in Sunderland in line with the overarching music strategy for Sunderland.

Progress

Funding is being sought from the Medium Term Financial Strategy with regard to a Music Development Officer that would work as part of the Arts & Creative Development team to address the issues within the Music Strategy and the recommendations from A Place to Play.

Recommendation 19:

To look at the creation of a music development group, that includes the key music stakeholders within the city, to ensure a coordinated and joined up approach to the development and implementation of the recommendations of this review and the wider music strategy delivery plan.

Progress

A review of the original Music City Steering group is underway to better reflect the organisations across the city and to support the implementation of the music strategy

Recommendation 20:

To devise a delivery plan including key actions, milestones and costings to monitor progress on the review report and its recommendations, that will sit within the wider delivery plan for music development in Sunderland.

Progress

This is currently underway and will be reported in the next Quarter.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Sustainability Scrutiny Committee are asked to receive this update as part of the monitoring arrangements for the policy review recommendations.

Contact Officer: Zoe Channing (0191 5148459)
Zoe.channing@sunderland.gov.uk