

**Moray Economic Strategy  
Tourism and Culture Group Meeting  
Arts and Culture Strategy – Culture Café  
Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2013, Elgin Community Centre**

**MEETING NOTE**

1) Welcome (Tina McGeever, Out of The Darkness Theatre Company – Chair).

Tina welcomed attendees and introduced the concept of the Strategy. She emphasised that the Moray Economic Strategy is for the people of Moray and should be something to be excited and enthusiastic about.

2) Culture Café 'The Collective' Overview (Karl Jay-Lewin, Bodysurf).

Karl gave an overview of the work of the Culture Café to date and how its membership is comprised. Volunteers within the group read out lines from the Culture Café manifesto. Sometimes the Culture Café will meet around a particular theme or topic. Each meeting will have a different host.

3) MEP Overview (Andrew Anderson, HIE).

Andrew gave an overview of the work of the Moray Economic Partnership in relation to the evening's event. The Tourism and Culture Group is one of five of the Moray Economic Strategy Operational Groups. The Group has recently developed a Tourism Strategy and it was during this process that the need for a separate Arts and Culture Strategy was recognised. This meeting forms part of an initial consultation which will be expanded on further. The Group looks to build on the work of the Culture Cafes and recognise the value of arts and culture and the impact they have on Moray. This will build a better case for public sector support.

4) National Context (Caroline Doherty, Creative Scotland).

Caroline gave an overview of Creative Scotland's remit which includes arts, culture and the creative industries. Creative Scotland are currently developing a three year plan and award funding from both the Scottish Government and the Big Lottery Fund. Caroline encouraged those in attendance to remember that Creative Scotland are also specialists in these areas and can offer advice and information as well as funding. The need to work together with joined up thinking was emphasised and the importance of local impacts. Creative Scotland work in partnership with Moray Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) among other organisations.

5) Methodology – Strategy Development (Anna McPherson, Creative Moray).

Anna explained that the Arts and Culture Strategy will be developed in accordance with other relevant local, regional and national strategies. All relevant stakeholders will be represented and consulted including HIE, Moray Council, tsi Moray the National Trust for Scotland and the NHS.

From this evening's event the Group are looking for voluntary expressions of interest for membership of a steering group which will develop the Strategy. Anyone interested was encouraged to let Anna or Andrew by the end of the meeting.

HIE will be tendering for a consultant to help with the process which will be ongoing with niche group meetings.

The draft Strategy will be reviewed by the steering group, with a target date of the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2013.

Anna also encouraged those who had not already taken part in the Survey Monkey to do so as these results will be used to develop the Strategy.

#### 6) Open Questions from Delegates.

Q: What is Creative Scotland's annual budget?

A: Creative Scotland have an annual budget of £80 million. The majority of this is awarded on an application basis with the remainder being spread across various funding groups.

Q: Where can someone who is setting up their own business within the arts and culture sector go for initial advice/mentoring/funding/support in the initial stages?

A: Business Gateway offer the above mentioned services to all businesses and work with HIE to distinguish those who are high growth. All businesses of any size can seek help from Business Gateway and this would be encouraged.

Q: A small group of practising artists have been looking for space to create a public gallery for their work. The main obstacle they are facing is high rates for premises. They are not a registered business or charity. Elgin Library does have space but it is not flexible enough. Does anyone have a potential solution for this problem?

A: The Small Business Bonus Scheme was suggested but this was an avenue the group had already explored. The Window Action Group in Forres was mentioned as an example. This was discussed with Elgin BID and is being considered as an option for any 2D art but is not suitable for sculpture, installation etc.

The need for an arts/cultural hub was emphasised. It would be a good opportunity for young people to get involved in arts and culture and also encourage spend to remain in the area. Mareel in Shetland was mentioned as an example of something to strive for for the community, by MSP Richard Lochhead. The facility would not just be great for practitioners but also the public.

Out of the Darkness (OOTD) are seeking premises in the centre of Elgin for a small theatre (up to 70 seats). The theatre would be opened out to the community for use as well as OOTD for their daily requirements.

#### 7) Breakout Sessions:

- Education.
- Health.
- Business.
- Events/Tourism.

Attendees were encouraged to discuss barriers and opportunities in the above areas.

8) Anchors Feedback from Breakout Sessions.

Anchors from each group presented the results from the session.

Please see separate Workshop Notes.

9) Next Steps and Closing (MSP Richard Lochhead).

Attendees were thanked for their time and efforts and encouraged remain positive about arts and culture in the area. MSP Lochhead emphasised how the arts and culture can lift spirits and bring a lot to the area. He suggested including the wider public in further consultation.