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From: Rachel
Sent: 28 September 2004 11:48
To: Karen
Subject: FW: Phase 1 consultation[Scanned]

Karen,

For your records, here's a detailed response on the Consultation from Mark Hope of Woodlands Art Association. He attended the sector meeting in Aberdeen on 8 September.

I'll send him a quick reply with thanks for his contribution.

Rachel

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Hope [mailto:pmarkhope@hotmail.com]
Sent: 25 September 2004 21:30
To: Rachel
Cc: mark.p.hope@shell.com
Subject: Phase 1 consultation[Scanned]

Dear Rachel

It was good to meet you when you were in Aberdeen with James. My thoughts on the questions which you asked us to address are below. None of them are very original, needless to say. They are from the perspective of someone who is a passionate believer in the arts and has seen the extent to which they can transform people's quality of life and well-being - all sorts of people from the very young to very old, very fit to severely disadvantaged etc etc. The arts also encourage diversity of thought and appreciation of the talents of others (as well as yourself) - for this reason alone we should substantially change the school curriculum asap!

Please let me know if you would like any additional input on particular topics. Please also give me a ring if you are ever up this way with any spare time - Fiona and I make good soup and bread and have a spare room if that's ever useful.

with best wishes

Mark (Hope)
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Education: we need to provide artistic and creative experiences for children throughout their school lives - from Nursery through University - including substantial participatory activity as individuals and in groups. There should be more emphasis on experience and less on lecturing. As a minimum, singing, drama, dance and art should be part of the curriculum for all children from an early age. There should be more interaction between good practicing artists and children/ students (in addition to interaction with arts teachers). Teacher training related to the arts needs to be improved including many more CPD courses in the arts.

There should be a direct connection between creative activities and the core elements of reading, writing and arithmetic; children who have great experiences want to read and write about them.

The institutional infrastructure: we need to build upon local, grass-roots activity. There are many artists within our community and we have a very active community arts centre, largely run by volunteers. But we waste much time trying to fund-raise in an increasingly competitive environment. The

SAC is bureaucratic and appears unable to take a long-term view of anything. No long-term operational funding is available (we should be planning for 3 - 5 years but we can only plan one year at a time). The system should encourage and support local arts centres which demonstrate they can deliver.

Our local authority is supportive but has very little money and much of what they have they spend on: (a) buildings or past white elephants (Duff House and Archeolink in Aberdeenshire's case) and (b) employing Council staff - this is much less efficient than funding local groups and artists.

Delivery of services and access to them: see above; encourage local groups and artists to deliver as much as practicable. Then plug the gaps with training and support - e.g. provide funding for successful local groups to share good practice and train neighboring areas. Centralise marketing and publicity and get VisitScotland, the Tourist Boards and Scottish Enterprise and their regional offices tuned in to arts & culture - we are missing some easy wins in this area because of myopia in those bodies.

Marketing & promotion: develop a reasonably comprehensive web-site for What's On in Scotland, linked to Tourist Boards and travel companies etc. Develop something that allows arts/cultural groups across Scotland to update it easily (no-one wants a monster that requires an army to feed it - but expertise is needed to set-up something effective and easily searchable and one or two bright people may be needed to keep the site smart and tidy).

Encouraging creativity: do all of the above properly and then think about the gaps.

Cultural Rights for the Scottish citizen and those of the creative community: if we get education right, much wider participation in arts & culture will follow. Hence everyone should be part of the creative community. I see this question as more about politics than arts or culture but the following might help:

For the citizen:

Every citizen is encouraged to develop their creative potential throughout their lives. Entitlements:

- a) Everyone will participate in group singing, storytelling, dance and drama from nursery through primary,
- b) Everyone will have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument (free) from nursery through primary and beyond (possibly subject to some attainment criteria in Academies),
- c) The curriculum will be adjusted to accommodate arts/cultural activity as part of the mainstream - reading, writing, English, maths, geography, history and probably every other subject can be informed by creative and project work that children undertake,
- d) During their education, everyone will have the opportunity to visit those sites of cultural significance in their local area plus at least [one] visit to [Edinburgh and/or Glasgow]
- e) access to professional arts performances at least once per year

for the creative community:

- a) artist in residence a norm for all communities - in libraries, schools, hospitals etc

I'm much less clear about how this can work but if all the above were actioned, there would be far more opportunities for artists to work productively in their communities.