



# **Peterborough Cultural Alliance Meeting Minutes 12 Dec 2024 | Lakeside Meeting Room | 10–1 pm**

## **In attendance**

Sughra Ahmed – Managing Director, Peterborough Cultural Alliance  
Matthew Bradbury – Chair, Peterborough Cultural Alliance  
Lydia Baldwin – Creative Cultures Leader, Peterborough Cultural Alliance  
Madiha Ashiq – Creative Cultures Leader, Peterborough Cultural Alliance  
Stephanie Peachey – Head of Visitor Engagement, Nene Park Trust  
Jamie Fenton – Partnership Manager, Culture, Sports and Leisure, Peterborough City Council  
Kate Hall – Creative Producer, Jumped Up Theatre  
Darren Buckman, Head of Cresset Operations  
Eva Woods - Peterborough Collective  
Sarah Haythornthwaite - Programme Director, Peterborough Presents  
Jag Singh – General Manager, Landmark Theatres  
Susie Thornberry, Artistic Director and CEO of Metal  
Laura Hensser, Executive Director, Cross-Site for Metal  
Ruth Campbell-Ekins – Director, Metal Peterborough  
Caroline Wallace – Relationship Manager (Engagement and Audiences), Arts Council England  
Jamie Jones – Vice Principal (Operations & Infrastructure), ARU Peterborough (online)  
Liz Knight – Academic Director, University Centre Peterborough (online)  
Jake Smith – Artistic Director & CEO, Eastern Angles (online)  
Jan Armitage, COO Peterborough Cathedral (online)

## **Invited and attending**

Abid Hussain, Director, Diversity (Senior Director), Arts Council England  
Claudia West, East Area Interim Director, Arts Council England

## **Apologies:**

Adrian Chapman – Executive Director, Peterborough City Council  
Rob Hill – Service Director of Housing and Communities, Peterborough City Council  
Representative from Norfolk & Norwich Festival  
Adrian Oates – Head of Fundraising, Nene Park Trust  
Sarah Wilson – Heritage Manager, Peterborough Museum

## **Minutes by:**

Lydia Baldwin, Peterborough Cultural Alliance

## Chair of Meeting – Matthew Bradbury

Item	Details
<b>Welcome (MB)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No conflicts of interest raised</li> <li>• No additions made to the agenda</li> </ul>
<b>Finance Report</b>	<p>In the absence of Head of Fundraising, Nene Park Trust, PCA Managing Director (SA) gave this report.</p> <p>So far PCA have spent £165,481 which amounts to approximately 25% of the annual budget, the majority of which have gone on core staff costs as the team has expanded. Of the remaining spends, the largest have gone towards the move of cultural organisations out of Chauffer's Cottage as they come to the end of their tenancy, and to Indigo, the data and audience company specialist delivering the PCA's data framework project. Work will now be done to re-map the budget in view of the 6 month extension granted by ACE.</p> <p>Upcoming priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spending SPF money (which has a closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> March) is now the priority.</li> <li>• A funding plan in place to cover the £406,980 match-funding, which begins with a bid to NLHF as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
<b>Director's Report (SA)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Budgets on track</li> <li>2. Team overview: SA reported on changes in PCA staffing, with the departure of Office Manager, Tracy Marshall, and the arrival of Madiha Ashiq, Creative Cultures Leader, Data &amp; Culture (a full-time post). PCA will be re-recruiting for Office Manager with a job pack ready in the New Year. SA asked PCA members to share widely. (SA thanked SH for managing the data framework in the interim, which will now be handed over to MA. There will be a data workshop in the New Year and work to connect this to PCC data project).</li> <li>3. Building the foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCA team building infrastructure and team culture</li> <li>• Building networks and partnerships (some of which are new relationships), a key building block for successful delivery. Memorandums are being put in place with Metal, Peterborough Museum, Jumped Up Theatre. An intercultural network has launched under PCA's management.</li> <li>• Build relationships with schools and C&amp;YP, particularly as a legacy to September 2024's thought leadership programme hosted at UCP. Connections being made with youth voice bodies (i.e. Youth Council, MPs and more).</li> <li>• Building connections, relationships and communication. This work has taken effort and the VIP dinner held recently is a</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

reflection of a successful journey in building these connections, although more is needed.

4. Opportunities

- Work to connect three approved strategies (cultural, economic growth, visitor economy) and explore synergies and overlap in a workshop in the New Year, in collaboration with Tom Hennessey. There is an aspiration for this working group to become a Cultural Compact. 10 crossover areas identified so far.
- Peterborough Celebrates: There is an opportunity here to 'unite under one banner', be it geographical, through programming or otherwise. Emphasis on resources (financial or staff time) not being increased. SA asked for feedback on who has capacity (and/or resource) to deliver on this.

5. Raising aspirations

- The PCA team recently attend a Bradford City of Culture breakfast panel focused on legacy. PCA plans to organise city visits to Bradford and Bristol, Liverpool and Luton.

6. Clarifying membership commitment to PCA

- In kind support (be it space or pro bono time) to be clarified through a 1-pager in order to strengthen the alliance and allow us to deliver the Cultural Strategy.

7. Arts in Schools (information provided by SP)

- PHACE legal transfer in progress
- Working group convened to establish guiding principles for Arts in Schools programme and to outline next steps for development and delivery. We aligned around some shared interests and priorities: co-creation with teachers and young people, building a robust and effective teacher network, emphasising schools' potential to act as cultural hubs, providing a spectrum of opportunity across key stages and abilities, using an enquiry-driven model, remaining evidence-based, being inclusive of all the arts, putting legacy and longevity at the heart of the programme.
- Moving towards bid from Paul Hamlyn Foundation arts-based learning programme, using the remaining PHACE funds as initial match. If successful, the working group will become the governance behind the programme. If not, then we either use remaining PHACE funds to initiate some activity whilst we work towards finding alternative support for the longer term programme.
- Short term actions: regular Core Team discussions to align on priorities and actions, re-ignite teacher network on 27 Feb at New Theatre with NNF Creative Educators support, teacher self-select to join working group, project design phase and first stage application by May 2025.

	<p><b>Feedback to Arts in Schools update</b>  KH there is overlap with Jumped Up's Esmee Fairbairn grant, Jumped Up to be looped in for programming clarity and leverage all to achieve same goals. Also weaving in creative careers strand.  MB affirmed priorities needed to be aligned as PHACE governance and transition moves forward.</p> <p>8. Other news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congratulations to Peterborough Collective who were recently awarded an NNF Young Creatives bursary to support transition from radio to podcast.</li> </ul> <p><b>Feedback</b></p> <p>KH asked that these positive updates be shared more widely by PCA, through the website and socials so that those who are not in the room can be brought along on the journey. CW agreed better communication was needed in sharing success stories, for PCA and for grassroots organisations who have a lot of great activity</p>
<p><b>Governance Update (MB)</b></p>	<p>Progress made to identify process of moving from current structure to CIO.</p> <p>Relationship with PCA members: Reminder that outside of membership there are a myriad of other cultural organisations, and there is a question still to be answered about how PCA engages with them and makes them feel part of the alliance (practically in terms of governance and communication).</p>
<p><b>ACE introductions</b></p>	<p>Introductions made between PCA members &amp; Arts Council guests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abid Hussain, Director, Diversity (Senior Director), ACE</li> <li>• Claudia West, East Area Interim Director, ACE</li> <li>• Caroline Wallace, Relationship Manager (Engagement and Audiences) - a regular PCA quarterly attendee</li> </ul>
<p><b>DEI Strategy and Plan (SA)</b></p>	<p>SA presented a summary of proposed DEI strategy. The paper is in draft and in close keeping with Arts Council guidance.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate that the PCA takes education and growth about protected characteristics seriously and proactively invests in this work. Over the 2 year ACE period timeline the two priority areas will be racism and islamophobia.</li> <li>• Demonstrate that the PCA is committed to continued investment in this work, particularly through partnering with high quality equalities educational organisations, over a prolonged period of time (min 5yrs)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise cultural literacy amongst cultural leadership in Peterborough</li> <li>• Establish a baseline of norms and values about how culture is spoken about</li> </ul> <p>SA spoke about how these objective align with the Cultural Strategy, particularly delivering on the diversity and care pieces.</p> <p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally poor ethos. Organisations and teams lack of diversity (and unstable nature of small arts orgs often works against supporting diversity) – see efficiency models</li> <li>• Efficiency models within culture work against best practice DEI work.</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge or experience about how to do this work</li> </ul> <p>SA reflected on earlier case studies delivered within Peterborough’s cultural sector within the last 2-4 years.</p> <p>Headline priorities for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board: membership &amp; model</li> <li>• Pace, capacity &amp; efficiency</li> <li>• Engaging with more diverse communities &amp; stakeholders</li> </ul>
<p><b>Discussion and next steps</b></p>	<p>RC-E commented she was looking forward to this change, especially structures of the board.</p> <p>MB responded to say this was an essential piece and could require a change of recruitment model. MB noted that, whilst we have initial priorities, groundwork needs to be laid for further work with other protected characteristic as we get values right from step one.</p> <p>AH (ACE) made a few comments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It makes sense to start with 1-2 focused areas. Racism is a good choice as lots of work goes before it, islamophobia is going to be more of a challenge for a number of reasons, be it data, hierarchical structures, reaction and empathy.</li> <li>2. Really likes a place-based approach – collective agency.</li> <li>3. Each of your orgs will move at a different pace, but recognising progress shouldn’t be compared. (C&amp;YP and talent pathways is going to be key)</li> <li>4. Intergenerational nature of the group could bring tensions but will also be of great benefit to this group.</li> <li>5. Quest for representation leads to challenges, need to be aware of the weight of expectation on any pioneering individual and to have the right support around them.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Leadership element is important – EDI is underpinned by balance of power – equity, social justice. How do we share power, let go of power?</li> <li>7. The enthusiasm is there, the main work is bringing in people who've been excluded for a long time, so that does take time to translate into new relationships and new audiences.</li> <li>8. Challenges and opportunity – stepping out of your organisations and going into communities.</li> <li>9. AH confirmed he was happy to assist with advice, best practice and leverage connections. (i.e. Nottingham Art Exchange)</li> </ol> <p><b>Next steps</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper revised and finalised</li> <li>• Timeline created and shared so everyone can engage</li> <li>• Tender process (emphasis on this work being delivered in partnership).</li> </ul>
<b>AOB</b>	<p>MB – Action reminders</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expressions of interest in the city visits (Bradford, Bristol, Liverpool, Luton) to SA early in New Year</li> <li>2. Digital meeting/workshop in New Year to explore involvement in Peterborough Celebrates 2025 – NPT</li> <li>3. SA to draft 1 pager about PCA members support doc (MOU), get feedback and keep final version for policy docs</li> </ol> <p>EW asked PCA members to support Culture Talks' transition to podcast by following them and sharing socials.</p> <p>MB – final thanks to members for their commitment</p>
	<b>END</b>