

CROSS PARTY GROUP ON CULTURE

Friday 19th June 2020

9:30am to 11:15am

Welcome

Group Convener Joan McAlpine (SNP) MSP (Convener of the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee) welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the MSPs in attendance including Claire Baker MSP, Maurice Golden MSP.

Maurice Golden MSP recently took on the role of Shadow Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Fair Work and Culture for the Conservative Party.

Claire Baker MSP is the Deputy Convener of the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee and is Shadow Secretary for Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs for the Labour Party.

Theme

Joan introduced the theme of the meeting as Culture & Climate Change and introduced the guest speakers; as follows:

- Ben Twist - Creative Carbon Scotland
- Briana Pegado - Creative Edinburgh
- Kit England - Climate Ready Clyde
- Ed Stack - Delic
- Beatrice Mocci - Statements

The group heard presentations from each of the guest speakers.

Breakout Groups

Group members and guests were then asked to go into virtual breakout rooms to discuss the question:

What practical actions can the cultural sector – including cultural organisations, their funders, audiences, supporters and stakeholders – take over the coming year as part of the Green Recovery to help Scotland achieve its aim of becoming a fairer, zero-carbon society that is adapted to a changing climate?

Top Ideas

The top ideas from each group were placed in the chat-box and read as follows:

Set a science based target - incremental is not enough
Climate change expert or advisor on boards
MSPs/speakers: Design - in terms of process as well as product design - provides some opportunities in thinking about adaptation as well as mitigation

Getting the cultural sector to inspire what a green recovery could look like in our places, and set out what good practices lockdown has inspired and what needs to be taken forward into the 'new normal'.
Send artists into large companies to innovate solutions to climate change 'green artists' we're thinking RBS big business
Putting environmental impact at the front of design education. It's often still treated as a bolt on / module.
Sustainability Group within organisations made up of staff and making use of champions with a passion to achieve change
Collectively explore models of international exchange which don't always require travel (ie recognising that you need to see and hear and experience work from other places but that our old business models relied too heavily on international touring income)
Start with education - make it central as part of educational courses
To consider inclusivity and access as part of Green Recovery...
Energy solutions such as shared energy in communities, community wind farms
For the short-term, a statement from Culture Counts about the value of the cultural sector to a green recovery. Through our individual organisation and individual artist recoveries, taking practical green actions like bike sheds, no totes at events etc. As a whole sector we can make a big difference.
More collaboration (collective purchasing etc), agreed values and behaviours (inc political leadership), More knowledge/ guidance (best choices to make), Funding for change difficult to come by, prop recycling/reuse (ZWS potential partner?)
Engaging with schools, colleges and linking to academic research to bring ideas to fruition; must be holistic
Learn from the experience of self-employed, freelancers in cultural sector for more flexible working models but need to improve self-employed workers rights and support
Collective capital investment in our building infrastructure - exploring models for investment
General effort to reduce carbon where possible; such as not travelling to meetings when there is no need to.
The culture sector could create a charter with basic points on how to live and create sustainably with "Environment First" at the heart of everything.
Remember the small incremental steps that can be taken - bike parks in studios; sustainable food choices for events.
We talked about the wider context to change the culture of consumption and production and the more practical idea about transport of audience and makers
(Try to) work from top level declarations of Emergency (which are a necessary starting point) to concrete goals that everyone in a sector can aim for (e.g. reducing flying) even though the specific milestones and practicalities might necessarily be different for different businesses (e.g. independent festival, or a major event)
Look for ways to help fund better waste collection and recycling systems in order to move closer (and faster) towards a circular economy.
Progress has to be made urgently - 'incremental' change is not enough; we must capitalise on the opportunity for change that the Covid-19 lockdown presents
Ensure that with universities making cuts not, that the cultural side doesn't take the biggest hit.
Re statement about value of culture in Green Recovery, there has been a letter to the Culture Secretary in England - we could do something similar in Scotland
Recognising that as more people enter the work force as self-employed and freelance there are lessons to be learned from the cultural sector - we could start with pensions for the self-employed/freelance, paid paternity and maternity leave and the recognition that self-employment has a lot of positive green impacts on our planet, but that workers are not supported nor protected nearly enough to enter into a decentralised way of working

We talked a lot about logistics of travelling and especially touring; there is an issue about the conflation of “culture” with “cultural industries”, and a sense that the future of “culture” can only be worked out successfully if we are able to transcend the alignment with the industrial world view/ paradigm. How can we achieve that in an inclusive way?

This is the time for all creative people and artists to be recognised; they have led the way often in articulating the situation and so they will with the climate challenge. Lockdown has revealed so much about us as individuals and what we are capable of discovering and learning; being resilient and creative in our thinking. I hope we can see our politicians recognise our artists (of all kinds) as the real wealth of the nation.

Implementation of Fair Work Principles when employing artists

Need short term goals and long term strategy
--

Formal CPG Business

Jen (Culture Counts); secretariat provided a general report from the last meeting and suggested asking Professor David Stevenson to the next meeting; David works with the Centre for Cultural Value as the Scotland academic representative. This was agreed and Jen will contact David.

Thanks

Joan thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 15th September and will incorporate the AGM.

Post Meeting Chat-Room

After the meeting a group of eight members discussed an idea around an environmental campaign run by artists.

The general idea is to form a group of artists to re-imagine the future for artists and the environment.

This small group would like to invite group members and those who attended today's meeting as guests to a campaign kick-start event; taking place on Zoom on Saturday 29th August 2020 from 10am until 12pm; anyone interested can join us on zoom to discuss the following:

- Similar Campaigns (listed below) / Devolved and Reserved Powers & Influence
- Campaign Aims & Objectives
- Campaign Name
- Communications (who will send out emails and organise zoom meet ups)
- Governance Structure
- Stakeholders
- Partners
- Next Steps
- Date of Next Meeting

There are some campaigns running at the moment which have similar interests to the group including:

- https://juliesbicycle.com/resource_hub/resources/a-just-green-cultural-recovery/
- <https://act.foe.scot/node/187/>
- <https://www.scotlink.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Green-Recovery-briefing-FINAL.pdf>
- <https://www.scotlink.org/our-work/our-society/green-recovery-group/>

The initial event will be organised by Culture Counts with group members expected to self-organise there-after.