



Accepted invite:

Katharine Stout, Focal Point Gallery (Co-Chair) (KS)
Joe Hill, Towner Gallery Eastbourne (Co-Chair) (JH)
Sarah Dance, Sarah Dance Associates (Co-Chair) (SD)
Abi Thompson, South Essex College
Alastair Upton, Creative Foundation
Alison Dewey, Southend Borough Council
Alex Riley, SELEP
Andy Pinkney, Thurrock Council/SECCADS
Anna Harding, Space Studios London
Ben Morgan, Thurrock Council/ SECCADS
Brian Warrens, National College Creative Industries
Caroline Reynolds, Southend Borough Council
Collette Bailey, Metal
Dalia Halpern-Matthews, Creating Cultural Capacities
Deborah Shaw, Marlowe Theatre (DS)
Jane Kilby, Wealden District Council
Jess Twyman, University of Essex
Jo Nolan, Screen South (JN)
Katie McGown, Canterbury Christ Church University
Lisa Ricketts, Thurrock Council/ SECCADS (LR)
Lorraine Cox, Southend Borough Council
Louise Aitken, SELEP
Lucy Medhurst, Ideas Test

Marc De'ath, Chelmsford City Council
Melanie Powell, Rother District Council
Michael Tymkiw, University of Essex (MT)
Mo Tomaney, Wise Birds Network
Natalie Parsons, University of Kent
Peter Alder, East Sussex County Council
Peter Bolton, Kent Music
Rachel Brown, Space Studios London
Sally Staples, East Sussex County Council (SS)
Sam Hawkins, CCSkills
Scott Dolling, Southend Borough Council
Sarah Wren, Kent County Council
Sharon Philips, GFE South (SP)
Susan Oliver, University of Essex (SO)
Victoria Pomery, Turner Contemporary
Virginie Giles, Medway Council

Apologies:

Adam Spain, Devonshire Collective/VOLT
Paul Cowell, Medway Council
Rebecca Hughes, Chelmsford Cultural Development Trust
Rosalind Green, Essex Book Festival

Introduction and apologies

SD welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Review of previous minutes/actions

The group agreed that the previous minutes were an accurate reflection of the meeting.

The matters arising are covered in this agenda.

Workstream Updates

- Workspace

JH updated the group and noted that a consultancy partnership has been appointed to undertake the workspace plan. As this is the cooldown period, and a project initiation meeting has not taken place, they cannot yet reveal who this is yet.

Very good candidates came through the procurement process and the appointed team already have a very good knowledge of the area.

SS noted that the SECEN Workspace Programme commission will deliver the following:

1. A proposal and project plan for delivering a Cultural Infrastructure Map for the SELEP region;
2. If approved, implementation of Cultural Infrastructure Map for the SELEP region;
3. Concise reports for East Sussex, Essex and Kent areas that combine to deliver a Creative Workspace Masterplan for the SELEP region;
4. Produce a cultural infrastructure toolkit to sit alongside the Cultural Infrastructure Map to expedite development of creative workspace;

5. Identify a minimum of three sites to be brought forward for development as creative workspace and offer one to one support alongside testing the efficacy of the toolkit;
6. Assessment of opportunities and challenges of 'creative opportunity zones' for SELEP;
7. A launch campaign and dissemination of findings and outputs.

- Prospectus

JH noted agreement at the last meeting to take forward a shorter version of the prospectus. Work with designers continues to pull together a PDF draft with a copy edit, and this will be shared with the Steering Group in the next couple of weeks.

- South East Creatives

LR noted that approval for the projects to be extended by six months was received to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 and allow more time to deliver the project.

Over the past three months they have seen 140 grant applications. Having to focussed on smaller grant applications but are looking to move the budget to allow for more money in the grants pot. Hopeful that there will be additional £60-70k grant money to award.

The project end date for delivery is 31st May 2021 (with project final close date in August 2021 – to make final payments and wrap up time). £100k of grants has been defrayed in the last quarter but dealing with large quantities of individuals that need additional support with their project to shift spending/activities – with a few not being able to proceed at all.

SD asked if Government were open to flexibility on the rules for this. LR noted that some of the outputs that the project was originally going to achieve, e.g. job creation, new businesses, is now not likely but the project will not be penalised for not reaching these targets.

Marlow Theatre Sector Support Fund Project

DS presented the Sector Support Fund proposal to the group – to be shared with the group.

The Catalyst for Culture Programme brings together partners; The Marlow Theatre (lead partner), Glyndebourne Opera, The Mercury Theatre.

The project aims to support the performing arts sector in SELEP delivering; shared origination/touring of socially distanced live performance, investment in new work (musicals, theatre, opera, dance), investment in new talent, investment in new forms.

KS asked if SELEP region artists would be prioritised and DS confirmed that the six commissioned artists would be entirely from the SELEP region.

SO asked if the artist would be spread across the region or clustered in a particular area. DS noted it will have to be an open call but there will be very clear criteria.

MT responded that the proposal sounds amazing given how hard the sector has been hit. Reaching out to people who are shielding/at risk is key, but the question was asked of how this audience is reached. DS responded that the organisations bring relationships with existing audiences and associated databases that can be used.

JN asked if it offers an opportunity for smaller organisations in SELEP area to be part of this and if the Signet proposal already exists or will this be new. DS responded that similar activity has been piloted but that this would be a new initiative.

SP thanked DS for an inspirational presentation and wondered if we could think about engagement the NHS and care homes as dissemination partners to ensure individuals who are shielded can engage with this.

The group endorsed the sector support fund proposal.

Sector Support Fund (SSF Working Group)

KS noted that the working group have brought forward a proposal for the SECEN Sector Support Fund Working Group that was brought together after the previous meeting. With the aim of bringing forward a proposal that secures jobs as part of Covid-19 recovery as well as something that promotes long term objectives.

The project focuses on the locality of the high street given that so many local areas have longer term strategic plans around the high street. Looking to maximise the benefit of existing high street funds and share learning across the region.

With the view to provide funds to involve the creative sector in these new community spaces that will form part of the recovery in town centres that are struggling.

Conversations have also been taking place with the Arts Council who also have an interest in creative organisations and reimagining the high street. Interested in a methodology for creative use of meanwhile space, economic modelling for embedding cultural organisations and align data capture across the high streets.

The method was to identify two high streets in each county which would be done by a working group with representation from across the area – by identifying high streets most in need and then an having an open call. This would benefit form a lead organisation that could appoint a project manager to coordinate this activity and bring forward an end report. There would also be three coordinators per region as well as budget for creative practitioners to be involved in conversations and funds to test work on the high street that is locally specific.

The outputs would focus on securing income, securing creative jobs, creating the conditions for future development, embedding a creative voice and join-up to existing projects.

JH reiterated that the two problems identified were creatives being paid to be involved in creative conversations, and the brokering of different sectors and having a coordinator on the group that could do this.

The group endorsed the sector support fund proposal.

Skills Covid-19 Funding Pot

LA provided a presentation to the group on the recently agreed SELEP Skills Covid-19 Fund.

SD emphasised the importance of skills, noting the people most hard hit economically by the pandemic are some of our younger people.

LA outlined that evidence and key findings showed the priority should be made to:

- Supporting individuals of all ages into work, particularly into sectors still recruiting such as construction, care, health, IT and food production.
- The funding should be employer led, flexible and supporting all ages.
- Covid-19 has exacerbated the digital divide, with digital skills and access becoming even more crucial.
- Proposal to build on the success of the SSF Tutor Bursary Programme (becomealecturer.org) website.

SELEP Board approved a proposed focus of:

- Pathway to jobs in SELEP growth sectors
- Maximising jobs arising through the digital revolution (all sectors)
- Digital skills for all – kit and training
- Innovative solutions to skills barriers
- Small pot for project management (shared with business support Covid-19 fund)

The next steps are taking this proposal to 18th September SELEP Accountability Board. Pending this and LEP Board's agreement on the focus on funding, procurements could be launched in October 2020. Winning bidders will be required to provide regular reports and updates.

LA also informed the group of the £2.4m Business Support Covid-19 Recover Fund which is going to the LEP Strategic Board on 2nd October.

This is the same format as the skills fund with three business support programmes for; visitor economy, digitalising business and supporting start-ups. With procurement for this staggered, starting in December. Contact Jo Simmons (jo.simmons@southeastlep.com) with any questions or further information on this fund.

SD noted that the creative sector was part of the visitor economy priority in the Business Support Fund.

JN noted that she is presenting on the 8th October on skills and requested SECEN members to email over a few lines on where you are as an organisation on skills, what are the gaps and the opportunities.

Economic data & impact gathering

This item was not fully covered during the meeting due to lack of time.

SD noted that the sector faces a particular challenge as we are not always working with FTEs, so the more information on data and evidence we can provide to SELEP the better.

Open feedback session

There was not time for this agenda item, but SD noted that emails can always be exchanged across the group and Dave Evans at ESCC will be able to share ways of communicating. SD also stated that SECEN colleagues can contact herself or the other co-chairs, KS and JH.

AOB

Meeting closed.