



Culture Board

Date/time	10am – 12pm, Wednesday 08 October, 2025
Location	Design West
Co-chairs	Councillor Ani Townsend – Bristol City Council Anna Rutherford - Design West
Attendees	Andrew Edwards, SS Great Britain; Ben Phillips, Bristol Hippodrome; Catherine Frankpitt, Strike Communications; Elise Harcombe, Bristol City Council; Esther Dermott, University of Bristol; Euella Jackson, Rising Arts Agency; Gill Simmonds, Brave Bold Drama; Heidi Vaughan, Tobacco Factory Theatres; Justine Kebby, Ashton Gate; Kate Ward, Spike Island Artspace; Lucie Martin-Jones, WECIL; Lynn Barlow, UWE; Martha King, Knowle West Media Centre and Filwood Community Centre; Samir Savant, St George's Bristol; Sarah James, WECA; Sarah Williams, Bristol City Council; Tara Sachdeva, Compass Presents (Compass Film CIC); Thomas Paine, Team Love; Wim Penhaul, Invisible Circus
Apologies	Anna Farthing, Bristol City Centre BID; Emma Hardie, Aardman Animations; Philip Walker, Bristol City Council
Observers	
ITEMS	
1) Welcomes & Introductions	
The chairs welcomed all and began the board meeting	
It was noted that Catherine Frankpitt will be presenting her item via Teams as she is unwell.	
2) Updates from last meeting	
<i>Sarah Williams of Bristol City Council reported:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The Culture Impact Survey: Impact of Culture 23/24 - Report will be available on The Arts and Culture Policy webpage.	

ACTION – Board members to actively promote and take part in the upcoming 2024/2025 survey

- Aardman will host an event focused on digital media. More information to be shared and circulated by the board.
- Rising Arts is recruiting for a training course. Further details to be circulated by board
- Cultural Development Team has requested members test the cultural surveys, which close at the end of October.

3) Update from Bristol City Council

Cllr Ani Townsend of Bristol City Council reported:

- AT attended a week-long film conference; an international culture conference in Barcelona, focusing on the intersection of culture and the climate emergency.

Action – AT to circulate videos from the conference.

- AT advised UNESCO has not yet finalised its methodology on how it monitors and measures data revolved around arts; there may be potential funding opportunities available for this
- AT highlighted that there was discussion of the importance of quantifiable data in cultural work.
- Board members emphasised the importance of protecting cultural identity following the increase of capitalism and globalisation.

Culture was recognised as a community building tool by board members, who highlighted the importance of this in response to the global rise of far-right movements - music and dance noted as key cultural expressions.

The board discussed the return of museum artefacts, as Bristol Museum returned items to Australia earlier this year.

Members advised that Welsh, Exeter, and Manchester delegates at Eurocities expressed interest in Bristol's approach to quantifying cultural data.

4) One City Updates

Judith Langdon of One City reported:

- Niotia has joined the One City team as a Business Support Apprentice, please note that anyone interacting with the City Office inbox will now be corresponding with Niotia.

- JL advised that recruitment is underway for a Data Insight Officer, funded by UWE, to support capturing the impact of One City as a wider movement.
- An advert will be posted this week for an Engagement Research Officer to replace Imogen.
- JL advised that Terms of Reference are being updated across boards, to address membership changes across boards over the past 18 months. The aim is to ensure consistency and reduce any bias within the board membership process.
- Latoyah McCallister Jones from St Pauls Carnival is transitioning to a new role, therefore leaving the board, and Vicky Lee from BID is going on maternity leave.
- JL advised that if a vacancy arises within 12 months of an appointment, previous applications will be reviewed first. If no suitable candidate is found, the role will be re-advertised. JL outlined that during parental leave, members may nominate someone to cover their role.
- If board diversity declines, there is flexibility to appoint additional members to restore balance.
- JL confirmed the new One City plan has been approved by the Governance Board.

ACTION – JL to circulate new One City Plan amongst Board members.

- The City Partners Breakfast on 22 of October will be dedicated to launching the plan.
- JL advised that efforts are being made to ensure events are more accessible to non-board members, and non-members of One City are still welcome to engage.
- JL spoke on the ongoing effort to conceptualise One City as a social movement.
- A quarterly webinar series will begin on 25th November, with the first focused on Culture in the city, with information sharing across multiple channels.
- The next City Gathering will take place on 22nd January at We The Curious, focusing on improving young people's life chances.
- JL also manages the International Team, who work closely with the One City Office.

- The rep for St Georges discussed International team member Zoe Gibbons, who hosted the Hannover delegation - hosting guests from one of Bristol's twin cities.

- The group travelled by train and were hosted at multiple venues across the city, including St George's; around 20 attendees, who were very youth and culture focused.
- The Board noted there is a strong synergy between Bristol and Hannover.
- The chair noted that 27 groups have come from Hannover to Bristol, but only two groups have travelled from Bristol to Hannover.
- The board was advised that small funding may be available for those with programmes to support twin city engagement - it may be worth investing more into Bristol's twin city relationships.
- It should be noted that the international team can be reached via Elise.
- Board members highlighted Bristol does not fully utilise its international twin city relationships.
- It was noted the UNESCO Film City status gives Bristol international recognition - In 2027, Bristol and Bordeaux will mark 100 years of twinning, coinciding with UNESCO status. Trinity Centre recently visited Bordeaux.
- The board's approach to twin cities should be embedded into the action plan.
- A board member advised that Bristol was represented at Eurocities.

ACTION: Notes from the Eurocities event will be shared by City Office

5) Responding to the One City Missions Workshop

The group was encouraged to begin thinking about how to prioritise which mission, collectively.

Feedback was shared from members that some actions felt too broad or vague.

There was discussion around breaking down goals into clear, achievable pathways rather than leaving them unattainable.

A group activity was held focused on refining and clarifying the missions.

6) Comms Update

Catherine Frankpitt of Strike Communications reported:

- Last meeting, there were discussions by the board on how to amplify the cultural sector.
- CF proposed an immediate action: creating regular op-eds or opinion pieces as a collective voice of the board - Each member would have the opportunity to contribute, provided the content aligns with the board's remit.
- CF proposed that these first-person pieces could be published across platforms such as news outlets, arts displays, LinkedIn — potentially one piece per month to build awareness and understanding of Bristol's cultural sector.
- Board members suggested themes such as health, economy, social mobility, happiness, and nature, which are all linked to One City.
- Board members theorised that a calendar of themes could be developed, allowing members to volunteer to edit, write, or pitch these pieces to media.
- The content could highlight culture's benefits to health, internationalism, nature, social mobility, happiness, and the economy.
- The board advised that the public may be unaware of the value of culture and why it continues to receive funding - There is a lack of understanding about the role of culture and its importance to the city.
- It was acknowledged that organisations should advocate to protect cultural funding in city budgets
- Board members agreed prioritising investment in culture was strongly supported. It was suggested these pieces may be published on Bristol 24/7. All related links should be hosted on the Culture One City page, within the cultural development subsite.
- It was acknowledged by members that different approaches should be used to reach different audiences, especially regarding investment in culture.

- The board stressed the need for the city to continue to fight for cultural sites, as it has done with historical houses.

7) Any Other Business

- The British Art Show is returning to Bristol for its 50th anniversary.
- Fundraising efforts are underway for a grant, with a deadline at the end of November. There will be opportunities for artist commissions and cultural activities. Invitations will be sent out soon.

- Anna Farthing noted that BIDs are coming together at the start of November, with interest in seeing empty spaces inhabited by cultural entities.
- Art in the City is a collaboration between Bristol City Council, Arnolfini, and Design West. Feedback — both positive and constructive — is welcome.