



Caroline Russell AM
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
LONDON SE1 2AA

14 June 2018

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
SE1 2AA

cc. Justine Simons, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries

Dear Sadiq,

Response to the draft Culture Strategy

I am responding in my capacity as a Green Party Member of the London Assembly to your draft Culture Strategy for London. My views on the draft Strategy are set out below. These should be considered along with the Strategy response from the Economy Committee.

Overall, I welcome the Strategy's ambition to improve access and participation in culture and the arts for all Londoners, both consumers and producers of culture, and those living and working from the centre to outer London.

Love London – access to culture

It is good to see the focus on increasing the diversity of cultural activities and enabling more Londoners to access culture on their own door step.

However, I was disappointed not to see any policies dedicated to improving access for people with disabilities. I would urge you to read the Cultural Inclusion Manifesto and adopt the recommendations in the final Culture Strategy. For example, recommendation four:

“There is an urgent need for strategic partnerships between Special Educational Needs organisations and Cultural Institutions in response to the shifting political landscape to ensure continued focus on guaranteeing the availability of enriching cultural experiences for all our young people.”¹



City Hall **Green** — Caroline Russell AM

caroline.russell@london.gov.uk **020 7983 4388** **@carolinerussell**

Culture and Good Growth – affordable creative workspace

Protecting creative workspace is something that my predecessor Jenny Jones and I have stood up for, for years.²

The draft Culture Strategy highlights your ambition to “increase provision of workspace so that creative businesses can thrive”. However, I fear that this policy will not always be met in the face of actual planning decisions.³ The final Strategy should make clear how your policies will take precedence in the face of competing plans for development.

Evidence of failing to fulfil this policy can be seen in the plan to demolish part of Vittoria Wharf in Hackney Wick, an Asset of Community Value and a cultural asset. You have said that the amount of creative workspace in the Hackney Wick Masterplan will remain the same. However, campaigners say less than 10 per cent of the space creative communities are currently using will be available at rates they can afford if the redevelopment goes ahead as planned.⁴ Thus the plans for development ignore your aim of protecting low cost workspace.

The London Plan mentions affordable workspace but it would be helpful to have a target for affordable workspace available in London and a specific definition of ‘affordable’ that relates to creative workspaces.⁵

Mariana Mazzucato, Professor in the Economics of Innovation and Public Value at UCL, told the Economy Committee that good growth should mean working on inclusion, sustainability and innovation together with a mission focus on public purpose and problem solving across sectors and communities.⁶ Creating the conditions for good growth means addressing housing, transport and environmental issues as interlinked challenges, not treated in isolation.

This example shows the tensions between your good growth policy, your healthy streets agenda, and environmental ambitions. I urge you to review the plans for Vittoria Wharf in the final Strategy and to use ‘good growth’ to address the needs of marginal cultural and creative spaces.

Creative Londoners – involving local communities

The draft emphasises the role that the Mayor’s Design Advocates will have in producing high quality architecture and design through Good Growth by Design, but it should also strongly acknowledge the proactive role that local communities can play in devising plans for their area.

When Earl’s Court was demolished London lost 42,000 square metres of commercial exhibition space. That is 30 per cent of the capital’s total exhibition space.^{7 8} The impact on local business has been immense, as the main attractor of footfall to the area has simply disappeared. The Save Earl’s Court campaigners have independently created alternative ideas for Earl’s Court that they would like developers to consider.⁹



City Hall Green — Caroline Russell AM

caroline.russell@london.gov.uk 020 7983 4388 @carolinerussell

The final Strategy should include details of the way local communities, like Save Earl's Court campaigners, will be supported and engaged early and throughout the process of producing any new plans for an area.

Local residents and campaigners should be signposted to the Culture At Risk Office (mentioned in Policy 6.3) to provide support and assistance when standing up for cultural practice and spaces in their area.

In addition, I would like to see more information in the final Strategy about the support that will be given to Business Improvement Districts to develop culture strategies (Policy 8.5) and how local residents and arts communities will be engaged in this process. Further, it would be helpful to set out what teams within the GLA will be engaged with the Business Improvement Districts.

Creative Londoners – good work

I remain very concerned by the levels of inequality and the erosion of workers' rights that affect many Londoners. The creative industries contribute £47 billion to the economy but there is still a culture of low-pay or working for free in the arts which limits diversity of participation.

The final Strategy should include more details of how the Good Work Standard (Policy 13.2) will support creative businesses to address poor pay and the "pockets of bad practice amongst creative employers across the capital" that you rightly identify as an issue.¹⁰ It should also include targets for the number of creative businesses signed up to the Good Work Standard.

As the Mayor of London, it is important that you show clear leadership on fair pay for those working in the creative industries. Payment of the London Living Wage should be a stated condition for any culture programmes and initiatives that the GLA are directly involved in setting up and commissioning.

Culture and Good Growth – Transport for London

I appreciate that the expansion of the tube and extension of the service into the night will not only help Londoners access culture across the capital but will also allow people to travel safely home after work.

The final Strategy should suggest innovative ways transport infrastructure will be used to promote cultural activity and events. In particular, (Policy 7) could include details of how the TfL estate and advertising space will be used to promote community cultural events. I am thinking specifically that adverts at local bus stops and in tube stations could be used to promote local events that would not otherwise be able to afford this type of advertising.



Spreading cultural activity to the outer London boroughs is crucial for creating an inclusive strategy for all Londoners. I would urge you to adopt the recommendations from the Economy Committee's *Rewrite the night: the future of London's night time economy* report, in particular, recommendations 6 and 7, which focus on support you can give to outer London Boroughs who are developing their Culture and Night Time Economy.

I have been very encouraged reading this Strategy that the broad issues you have covered will enable more Londoners to curate, enjoy and work in culture and the arts across London. I hope that in the final Strategy you will provide more details of how you intend to overcome some of the pressing challenges faced by the cultural sector in London and that the tensions between the aims of this Strategy and those of your Healthy Streets, Environment and Housing strategies are addressed.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Russell
Green Party Member of the London Assembly

¹ <http://culturalinclusion.uk/>

² Artist communities in Hackney Wick. MQ 2014/0023

http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_273386

Artist communities in Hackney Wick. MQ 2014/5053

http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_279295

Industry in Hackney Wick. MQ 2014/5054

http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_279296

³ Culture for all Londoners - Draft Culture Strategy, Mar 2018

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2017_draft_strategies_culture_2.0.pdf page 35

⁴ Plans to demolish Hackney artist space must be binned plan, Nov 2017 <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/assembly/caroline-russell/creative-hackney-hub-should-be-allowed-to-flourish>

⁵ London Plan, Dec 2017 - Policy E3 Affordable workspace

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/new_london_plan_december_2017.pdf

⁶ London Assembly Economy Committee, meeting transcript, 16 Jan 2018

<https://www.london.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/b16895/Appendix%201%20-%20Transcript%20-%20Item%205%20Tuesday%2016-Jan-2018%2010.00%20Economy%20Committee.pdf?T=9>

⁷ Exhibition space in London. MQ 2017/2795

http://questions.london.gov.uk/QuestionSearch/searchclient/questions/question_294482

⁸ Earls Court Exhibition Centre 1 & 2, EARLS COURT REDEVELOPMENT SITE London SW5

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/idxWAM/doc/Other-1724268.pdf?extension=.pdf&id=1724268&location=Volume2&contentType=application/pdf&pageCount=1>

⁹ Earl's Court – build the world's biggest venue. Save Earl's Court Campaigners.

<http://www.saveearls court.com/news/artist-duggie-fields-supports-petition-to-build-worlds-greenest-venue-on-the-site-of-the-earls-court-masterplan>

¹⁰ Culture for all Londoners, Mayor of London's Draft Culture Strategy, Mar 2018.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2017_draft_strategies_culture_2.0.pdf Page 119

