

MEETING OF THE NORTH AMERICA ASSOCIATION – TUESDAY 4 NOVEMBER
AT 16:30 IN HMS DARING ROOM, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,
BIRMINGHAM

Attendees

Jo Andrews, BCU

Erica Arthur, UoB

Chris Allen, Turves Green School

Carl Smith, The Edge Consortium

Ravinder Masih, AVFC

Kimberley Sangha, AVFC

Jack Kelly, National Express

Mandy Haque, Birmingham Airport

Symon Easton, BCC

Mike Murray, BCC

Heather Law, BCC

1. Apologies

- Apologies were noted

2. Action points/notes from last meeting, 11 September 2014

JA – invites attendees who haven't already done so, to send their pen portrait and photo to HL.

3. Update from Chair - Jo Andrews (Voices of War and Peace, the Poetry Foundation)

JA – met with Steve Bridges, Chicago Consul General in September and discussed the Voice of War and Peace initiative. Steve suggested that Kansas is better placed as a city to work on this initiative given its WW1 Museum and connections.

The Poetry Foundation link with a local Birmingham school has stalled due to a mismatch in terms of the age profile for participating students.

ACTION: MM & JA to explore an alternative route to set up a similar collaboration between Birmingham school and Chicago based institution.

4. Presentation from Mandy Haque, Business Development Manager, Birmingham Airport.

Please see attached presentation.

There will be direct flights to NY commencing spring 2015.

5. Update from chairs of subgroups

- a) Education:

HE – Jo Andrews (Roosevelt, De Paul and BABC)

- BCU has signed off an MOU with Roosevelt Business School. De Paul are wishing to offer internships, the DePaul Museum of Art are engaged in an ongoing dialogue
- BABC are holding their national conference in NY on 15-17.05.2015.

Schools - Carl Smith

- Rupert Ward has secured BABC money to fund school links between Birmingham and Chicago. \$4,000 is available to fund year 1, then \$2,000 in the subsequent 4 years. The intention is to create a body of work which could attract other sponsors in the future.

The intention is to organise Skype poetry slams; arrange other forms of writing exchange and explore other curricular opportunities. Turves Green school will be partnering with Hanson Park elementary school. A bid is currently being worked up and will be submitted to BABC.

JA suggested linking in to Voices of War and Peace.

SE suggested that Gallery 37 may be rejuvenated in Birmingham and this may present an opportunity to dip into further funding. SE also keen to find out if Rupert Ward had made contact with Julie Burros, Chicago's new Chief of Arts and Culture.

- b) Culture and Sport – Symon Easton

- SE is planning to send out the proforma which was developed to capture international cultural activity across the city
- BRB still plan to go to Houston, but this is finance dependent.
- Links being forged between DanceXchange (Birmingham) and NYT2 dance project in Chicago.

- c) Business and trade – Jack Kelly

- RM provided update on AVFC – The Kicks programme (working with young people in 'at risk' areas in constructive activity in Birmingham),

transferred to Chicago and managed by Chicago Fire. An article is on the www.distinctlybirmingham website about the programme.

- JK is planning to launch an internship programme in both the states and is looking for other potential companies to get in touch with.

d) Public services – Mike Murray

- We have engaged with UoB's Institute of Applied Social Sciences Department to work with a Seoul Civil Servant on an MBA programme to undertake an international comparative study of youth services in Chicago, Birmingham, Seoul and Johannesburg. The study will identify best practices and lessons we can learn from at the council.

6. Current Birmingham / North America activity (report attached)

HL shared webpage refresh with the group

7. Visit to Chicago – early 2015

Group keen to co-ordinate N.A. activity in Chicago by arranging a joint working visit to the States early 2015. Group discussed potential Birmingham themed evening at the Consul General's Office to promote Greater Birmingham and strengthen the activity currently being pursued.

8. Date and time of next meeting

January 13th 16:30

9. Any other business

- Buddy Wakefield, US spoken word celebrity is in Birmingham on 26 November at the Victoria