

**Freedom of Information request regarding the Arts Council's long term strategic approach to jazz and the Arts Council's approach will mean a stronger future for jazz**

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [<mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** 21 September 2016 12:21

**To:** FOI

**Subject:** Freedom of Information request

Dear Sir or Madam

Althea Efunshile, Deputy Chief Executive of Arts Council England at the programme launch of the EFG London Jazz Festival for 2016 talked of a long term strategy and stated:

“Our long term, strategic approach to the form (jazz) has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues, including **Redacted** who many of you will know. Our approach will mean a stronger future for Jazz; greater resilience, a stronger focus on talent development and progression, and new audiences.”

This speech is also published on the Arts Council website.

I would be grateful if the Arts Council could provide me with the concrete, explicit document that states Arts Council England's “long term strategic approach to the form” Also I would be grateful if the Arts Council would provide records of the conversations that the Arts Council has had with the "sector" that helped develop this long term strategy.

Very many thanks

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins

[chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com)

**On 18 October 2016 at 09:59, FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)> wrote:**

Dear Chris

Thank you for your request for information from the Arts Council.

As previously mentioned, I can confirm that this request was considered in line with our obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**Your request:**

“I would be grateful if the Arts Council could provide me with the concrete, explicit document that states Arts Council England's “long term strategic approach to the form” Also I would be grateful if the Arts Council would provide records of the

conversations that the Arts Council has had with the "sector".that helped develop this long term strategy. ”

### **Our Response:**

Our approach to supporting a variety of music genres, including jazz, has been published in the Music Appendix to the Corporate Plan 2015-18, which can be found here:

[http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Corporate-Plan\\_2015-18\\_Music\\_Appendix.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Corporate-Plan_2015-18_Music_Appendix.pdf)

Jazz has been identified as an objective under Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries.

Our approach has been formed by formal and informal conversations with the sector about a long term strategy for development over the past couple of years. We do not hold a record of these conversations.

Sector development needs and intelligence have been gathered over time in numerous meetings with jazz related national portfolio organisations and through ongoing monitoring of their awards.

Additionally a range of artists and organisations have been reached as part of the Grants for the arts pre-application advice, and seminars, and information has also been collated through monitoring of successful applications. We are also able to identify sectoral needs and requirements through our contact with potential, and successful applicants to a range of our Strategic funds, such as Strategic Touring.

We hold regular meetings with promoters, representatives from venues and educational establishments and work with them on activity such as seminars, for example; our ongoing relationship with the Royal Academy of Music has included the delivery of several seminars over the last three years, as has our work with the NPO, Serious via the Take 5 and Move on Up programmes.

We have a dedicated Relationship Manager, Music, who is a professional jazz artist, whose focus is the jazz sector. They have met with many prospective applicants for Arts Council funding that specialise in jazz, one example is an organisation that supports women in jazz and have endorsed the all-female ensembles, another example is a discussion with an organisation that proposes a scheme supporting talented young jazz musicians.

We also have a group of nationally representative Relationship Managers, who meet quarterly to review investment in jazz and opportunities to support the sector further via all funding programmes. This group supports the Director, Music in delivering a national coordinated approach to jazz development. We continue to collate and analyse funding information through our ongoing data and reporting mechanisms.

I am sorry we are unable to provide information the way you had hoped but do hope that you find this is information helpful.

We hope you are satisfied with the way in which we have dealt with your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, however, if you are not satisfied that this is the case then you are entitled to an internal review. If you do wish for an internal review of the manner in which we have applied the Freedom of Information Act in this case, please contact me at the address above, explaining what specifically you would like us to review under the Act. Alternatively you can detail your specific concerns in writing and send them to the Chief Executive, Arts Council England, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3HF or email to [chiefexecutive@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:chiefexecutive@artscouncil.org.uk)

Subsequently, if you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Kind regards

**Redacted**

**Redacted**  
**Senior Officer, Information**  
**Arts Council England**

0161 934 4469  
The Hive, 49 Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1FN

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [mailto:[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** 18 October 2016 16:31  
**To:** FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: Freedom of Information request

Dear **Redacted**

Very many thanks for your email with the information. It is very much appreciated

I would be grateful for clarification as to the exact meaning of: "*extend talent pathways and opportunities in jazz and urban music*",

Objectives relating to goals are usually in a quantified form. What is the quantified objective?

A strategy is a coherently constructed, course of action; a plan that will be used to achieve an organisations goals and objectives. For the avoidance of doubt what is the strategy to achieve this particular objective?

The crucial issue in jazz are jazz promoters and especially volunteer jazz promoters. There appears to be no explicit mention of jazz promoters and especially volunteer jazz promoters under Goal 2

Again for the avoidance of doubt, it is stated that: "*Our approach has been formed by formal and informal conversations with the sector about a long term strategy for development over*

*the past couple of years. We do not hold a record of these conversations".* Are there minutes or notes kept of these meetings? A conversation explicitly implies a meeting. As there have been conversations with the sector about a long term strategy over the past couple of years; is there a long term strategy for jazz or a rough draft of a strategy or indeed a note of a long term strategy that has been developed over the past couple of years?

My apologies but yet again for the avoidance of doubt "*sector development needs and intelligence have been gathered over time in numerous meetings with jazz related national portfolio organisations and through ongoing monitoring of their awards.*" As these sector needs have been gathered are they in published form? How do they exist? Do they exist in notes or minutes of the numerous meetings? How are these needs relayed to colleagues and people involved in jazz development at the Arts Council?

Has the Relationship Manager, with responsibility for jazz, kept notes of these many meetings with applicants? If not how are colleagues informed about the needs of the jazz constituency? How is feedback from these meetings relayed to colleagues?

I note that there is "*a group of nationally representative Relationship Managers, who meet quarterly to review investment in jazz and opportunities to support the sector further via all funding programmes. This group supports the Director, Music in delivering a national coordinated approach to jazz development. We continue to collate and analyse funding information through our ongoing data and reporting mechanisms.*" Is there an explicit document or documentation that details the national coordinated approach to jazz development? Are there minutes of these meetings? What decisions have been made by this group on the national coordinated approach to the development of jazz? Are these decisions in concrete form.

Very many thanks for your time in this matter and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Chris

Chris Hodgkins  
[chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com)

**On 4 November 2016 at 09:30, FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)> wrote:**

Dear Mr Hodgkins

Thank you for your further letter enquiring about our approach to jazz investment and development.

We are satisfied that our current approach as described has had a positive impact on the broader jazz sector in England, with a substantially higher investment in Jazz via our NPO programme, a higher number of Grants for the arts awards being made, and additional investment in Jazz via Strategic Funds.

Our approach has supported opportunities for a broad diversity of artists in Jazz, and has encouraged and supported young Jazz talent. We are keen that our funding should encompass all aspects of the Jazz ecology, including Jazz promoters, and many conversations have been had. However, we cannot guarantee success when

funding decisions are made at Panel; we advise that applicants make a point of aligning with our Strategic Goals, as published, to give themselves the greatest opportunity of being funded.

If there are aspects of our work about which you would like to talk to us, my colleagues in the Music Team would be happy to meet with you. May I suggest that you contact the Music Team Assistant, **Redacted**, in the first instance. **Redacted** email is [redacted@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:redacted@artscouncil.org.uk) or you can ask to speak with him directly via our Customer Services team by phone on 0845 300 6200 or 0161 934 4317.

I do hope you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely

**Redacted**

**Redacted**  
**Senior Officer, Information**  
**Arts Council England**

0161 934 4469  
The Hive, 49 Lever Street, Manchester, M1 1FN

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [<mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** 04 November 2016 10:12

**To:** FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)>

**Subject:** Re: Freedom of Information request

Dear **Redacted**

Many thanks. However I asked for clarification on a number of matters under the Freedom of Information Act relating to an ongoing enquiry. I am copying them from my email of the 18th October 2016. I would be grateful if these points were answered. They also relate to a public statement made by the Arts Council so I would have thought all these facts would have been easily available.

*"I would be grateful for clarification as to the exact meaning of: 'extend talent pathways and opportunities in jazz and urban music,'*

*Objectives relating to goals are usually in a quantified form. What is the quantified objective?*

*A strategy is a coherently constructed, course of action; a plan that will be used to achieve an organisations goals and objectives. For the avoidance of doubt what is the strategy to achieve this particular objective?*

*The crucial issue in jazz are jazz promoters and especially volunteer jazz promoters. There appears to be no explicit mention of jazz promoters and especially volunteer jazz promoters under Goal 2*

*Again for the avoidance of doubt, it is stated that: "Our approach has been formed by formal and informal conversations with the sector about a long term strategy for development over the past couple of years. We do not hold a record of these conversations". Are there minutes or notes kept of these meetings? A conversation explicitly implies a meeting. As there have been conversations with the sector about a long term strategy over the past couple of years; is there a long term strategy for jazz or a rough draft of a strategy or indeed a note of a long term strategy that has been developed over the past couple of years?*

*My apologies but yet again for the avoidance of doubt "sector development needs and intelligence have been gathered over time in numerous meetings with jazz related national portfolio organisations and through ongoing monitoring of their awards." As these sector needs have been gathered are they in published form? How do they exist? Do they exist in notes or minutes of the numerous meetings? How are these needs relayed to colleagues and people involved in jazz development at the Arts Council.*

*Has the Relationship Manger, with responsibility for jazz, kept notes of these many meetings with applicants? If not how are colleagues informed about the needs of the jazz constituency? How is feed back from these meetings relayed to colleagues?*

*I note that there is "a group of nationally representative Relationship Managers, who meet quarterly to review investment in jazz and opportunities to support the sector further via all funding programmes. This group supports the Director, Music in delivering a national coordinated approach to jazz development. We continue to collate and analyse funding information through our ongoing data and reporting mechanisms." Is there an explicit document or documentation that details the national coordinated approach to jazz development? Are there minutes of these meetings? What decisions have been made by this group on the national coordinated approach to the development of jazz? Are these decisions in concrete form."*

Many thanks for your attention in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins  
[chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com)

**On 16 November 2016 at 14:49, FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)> wrote:**

Dear Chris

Thank you for your email.

I note you are seeking further information and I hope these points below help to address your concerns.

- 'Extend talent pathways in jazz and urban music' = to improve opportunities for aspiring musicians from all backgrounds in these genres, at all stages of the talent pipeline, from first exposure to advanced training.
- All investments align with our over-arching Strategy, Achieving Great Arts and Culture for Everyone. We want to increase investment in jazz and other

non-classical genres and to support access to funding opportunities by the broadest diversity of applicants. We do this by identifying and supporting organisations and activity that aligns with Arts Council's stated objectives (every applicant, in every discipline or sub-genre, needs to demonstrate alignment with our published objectives). We have successfully achieved an increase in our funding for jazz through NPO, Gfta and Strategic programmes.

- All Gfta and Strategic projects are required to submit an activity report; funded organisations submit an annual report and data return which captures the impact of Arts Council funded activity.
- Meetings and conversations with potential Gfta applicants will be logged in individual Relationship Managers' calendars and in the Gfta conversation tracker. Individual applications will reference pre-application advice from Relationship Managers. In addition, RMs will identify external opportunities to provide funding advice/surgeries to potential applicants.
- Meetings with sector representatives including NPOs will be noted in calendars and followed up with email correspondence as appropriate. The purpose of these meetings is to encourage and advise on funding applications where appropriate. We encourage aspiring applicants to contact their local ACE office and seek advice so that they are best-placed to submit competitive applications.
- The Music Appendix does not explicitly reference jazz promoters but encompasses them. By and large, our ambitions are non-genre specific, eg: 'We will fund organisations that appeal to under-served audiences or operate in areas where engagement is low'; and '[we will] work with amateur artists and voluntary sector promoters to ensure the widest possible reach of our funding and address any gaps in the professional infrastructure.' (Goal 2)
- The purpose of our internal jazz-focused RM conversations is to share intelligence about jazz activity nationally and to ensure a nationally consistent approach to the delivery of the Arts Council's Goals and 10 year Strategic Plan through jazz.

I do hope his further detail is useful to you but if you require further clarification on any point, or if you are seeking a better understanding of the work the Arts Council is doing for Jazz, please contact **Redacted** in the Music Team, his email is [redacted@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:redacted@artscouncil.org.uk) or you can ask to speak with him directly via our Customer Services team by phone on 0845 300 6200 or 0161 934 4317.

Kind regards

**Redacted**

From: Chris Hodgkins [mailto:[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)]

Sent: 16 November 2016 15:10

To: FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)>

Subject: Re: Freedom of Information request

Dear **Redacted**

Very many thanks for this and it is greatly appreciated. However my original query drew attention to a public statement made by the deputy CEO of Arts Council England

“Our long term, strategic approach to the form (jazz) has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues, including **Redacted** who many of you will know. Our approach will mean a stronger future for Jazz; greater resilience, a stronger focus on talent development and progression, and new audiences.”

I asked the following question:

*I would be grateful if the Arts Council could provide me with the concrete, explicit document that states Arts Council England's “long term strategic approach to the form” Also I would be grateful if the Arts Council would provide records of the conversations that the Arts Council has had with the “sector” that helped develop this long term strategy.*

I appreciate the time this has taken and the efforts of yourself and colleagues. However I must press for an answer to the explicit public statement made by the deputy CEO of the Arts Council:

Has Arts Council England a long term explicit documented strategy for jazz in England? Yes or no. If yes I would appreciate a copy.

Does the Arts Council keep explicit documented records of the conversations held by the jazz sector and colleagues. Yes or no. If yes I would appreciate the crucial documents that have shaped the strategy for jazz.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

Kindest regards

Chris

Chris Hodgkins  
[chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com)

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** FOI <[FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk)>

Date: 21 November 2016 at 08:59

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information request

To: Chris Hodgkins <[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)>

Dear Chris

Thank you for your email, I'm sorry you find our answer unsatisfactory.

You have asked if Arts Council England a long term explicit documented strategy for Jazz in England. As we advised in a previous email, our approach to supporting a

variety of music genres, including Jazz, has been published in the Music Appendix to the Corporate Plan 2015-18, which can be found here: [http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Corporate-Plan\\_2015-18\\_Music\\_Appendix.pdf](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Corporate-Plan_2015-18_Music_Appendix.pdf). Jazz has been identified as an objective under Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries.

Althea's use of the word 'strategy' was to convey consistent steps taken to achieve an objective – in this context, to help Jazz artists and organisations access our funding. Steps taken were as we have described: to co-ordinate RM engagement internally through sharing intelligence and identifying opportunities for investment in projects and organisations; and externally by promoting awareness of our funding through funding surgeries, and at public events like the LJF. We detailed this in our earlier correspondence with you.

Our conversations with organisations and individuals are noted and logged, as we have described. The advice I gathered from our Music Team is that we measure success year on year based on levels of investment and delivery against our strategic goals. There is no stand-alone strategy for any sub-genre of music: we invest in Jazz projects and organisations that align with our over-arching strategic plan, Achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone; as a sub-genre of music, Jazz is included in the general intentions described in the Music Appendix to the 15-18 Corporate Plan.

Investment is on an application basis – we make no investments other than via the published application process and funding programmes. Our achievement has been to extend the reach of funding opportunities, and to support Jazz applicants to address our overarching Goals effectively so that they are successful in their applications for funding.

We can provide no further information in relation to the points you have raised. However, I would point out to you that our support for Jazz has increased substantially, as Althea described in her speech.

Our offer of a conversation still stands and we do recommend you correspond with **Redacted**, Assistant in the Music Team, who can put you in touch with the most appropriate person.

I hope you find this extra information helpful.

Kind regards

**Redacted**

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [<mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** 25 November 2016 12:02

**To:** Enquiries <[Enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:Enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk)>

**Subject:** Fwd: Freedom of Information request

To Head of Customer Services

Dear Sir or Madam

I have read the complaints procedure and I am advised to write to you first for advice.

Althea Efunshile, Deputy Chief Executive of Arts Council England at the programme launch of the EFG London Jazz Festival for 2016 talked of a long term strategy and stated:

“Our long term, strategic approach to the form (jazz) has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues, including **Redacted** who many of you will know. Our approach will mean a stronger future for Jazz; greater resilience, a stronger focus on talent development and progression, and new audiences.”

This speech is also published on the Arts Council website.

I felt that Ms Efunshile had misled people with this this statement and I made a Freedom of Information inquiry and the correspondence is attached below. The Arts Council staff in the matter of my inquiry have been very helpful and courteous. However the result of my inquiry is that it is clear there is "There is no stand-alone strategy for any sub-genre of music." Which is at variance with the public statement of the Deputy Chief Executive of the Arts Council who as a matter of public record stated:

“Our long term, strategic approach to the form (jazz) has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues.”

Furthermore it was stated in answer to my F o I request regarding "the many conversations between the sector and my colleagues", that "Our conversations with organisations and individuals are noted and logged, as we have described.". Clearly no minutes are kept as under the F o I as I have asked for them to be produced and they are not forth coming. The notion that a long term strategic approach has been shaped by conversations with colleagues and the sector I feel is also misleading as there are no records of these conversations or discussions.

I would appreciate your advice on this matter as this complaint may well fall outside the Arts Council's complaints procedure and be a matter for the Ombudsman.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins  
[chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com)

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Redacted <redacted@artscouncil.org.uk>

**Date:** 2 December 2016 at 11:02

**Subject:** RE: Freedom of Information request

**To:** "chrishodgkins3@gmail.com" <chrishodgkins3@gmail.com>

Dear Chris,

Thank you for taking the time to write to us.

Having looked over your initial FOI request, and the correspondence that has followed with the team, it appears that there is some misunderstanding centred on the phrasing that Althea Efunshile has used within the speech you reference. In understanding if the approach by the team was appropriate, it is key to determine what we as an organisation mean when we use the term 'strategy,' and the context in which this word was used.

I found it was important to look at the context of the extract you have focussed on within this speech, and the statistics that Althea discussed alongside it. I have looked through the published version on the website, and found that the statement you have mentioned appears within the following section:

*“At the Arts Council, as well as our growing investment in jazz in our current National Portfolio, we’ve also increased the value of our Grants for the Arts awards for jazz by more than 250% since 2012.*

*In the current year to date, jazz projects have received more than £417,000 through Grant in aid.*

*In the last two financial years we have awarded £1.2m of strategic touring funds to jazz related projects – a tenfold improvement on the £120,000 invested in the previous two years.*

*Our long term, strategic approach to the form has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues, including **Redacted** who many of you will know.*

*Our approach will mean a stronger future for Jazz; greater resilience, a stronger focus on talent development and progression, and new audiences.”*

This demonstrates a considerable rise in the funding that has been provided for jazz projects and organisations, through the overall strategic aims as detailed within [our ten year strategic framework Achieving Great Art and Culture for everyone](#). Our wider aims as an organisation have considerably benefited jazz as an artform, and we will continue to support it in this way. This is the long term, strategic approach as referenced by Althea.

The excerpt of text that you have referenced within your FOI request cannot be considered as a standalone statement, more a rounded conclusion based on the increase in funding we have provided to jazz since 2012.

My colleagues in the Freedom of Information team have assured me that they have released all of the relevant information that we have that relates to your request. We do not hold the minutes for the conversations you have mentioned, so we would be unable to provide any further information of this nature. The team encouraged you to contact **Redacted**, the assistant in the music team in London, to discuss the matter further, which I would still encourage you to do. His email address is [redacted@arts council.org.uk](mailto:redacted@arts council.org.uk). Through this, **Redacted** may be able to determine if we have any more specific documents or publications that you may find helpful.

Based on the information that has been presented, unfortunately this would not be eligible for our formal complaints procedure as there is no evidence of maladministration, and we have provided all of the relevant information for your request so we would not be able to assist further. We now consider this matter to be

closed, and will not enter into further discussion over the wording of the speech that Althea delivered.

We feel we have fully answered your FOI request, however as **Redacted** has mentioned, if you do wish for an internal review of the manner in which we have applied the Freedom of Information Act in this case, you can contact him at the address [FOI@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:FOI@artscouncil.org.uk), explaining what specifically you would like us to review under the Act. Alternatively you can detail your specific concerns in writing and send them to the Chief Executive, Arts Council England, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3HF or email them to [chiefexecutive@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:chiefexecutive@artscouncil.org.uk).

Kind regards,

**Redacted**  
**Complaints Manager, Customer Services**  
**Arts Council England**

0161 934 4322  
0845 300 6200  
National Support Centre – The Hive

On 2 December 2016 at 11:32, **Redacted**<[redacted@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:redacted@artscouncil.org.uk)> wrote:

Dear Chris,

Following my earlier response, please allow me to clarify how **Redacted**, the assistant for the team in London may be able to assist. **Redacted** can put you in touch with an appropriate member of the Music Team. Through this, the Team may be able to determine how and whether we can provide further information which can inform or reassure you.

Additionally, I must also clarify that we do not hold minutes of the sector conversations you have mentioned, but have explained in detail how external approaches to RMs are logged and followed up. Throughout the correspondence you have received, my colleague has explained the way in which Arts Council England operate and how we correspond with the sector.

I apologise that these points were not made clearer in my initial response.

Kind regards,

**Redacted**  
**Complaints Manager, Customer Services**  
**Arts Council England**

0161 934 4322  
0845 300 6200  
National Support Centre – The Hive

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [<mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** 02 December 2016 12:11

**To:** Redacted

**Subject:** Re: Freedom of Information request

Dear **Redacted**

Many thanks for this. However I am happy to talk to anyone at the Arts Council but to do so I need the concrete long term strategic approach in front of me. Also I am puzzled by this statement "**Redacted** can put you in touch with an appropriate member of the Music Team. Through this, the Team may be able to determine how and whether we can provide further information which can inform or reassure you". I do not think we need a meeting to determine what the "Music Team" can or not provide. Can they me provide with the documentation that I have asked for? Yes or know? Do they have a long term strategic approach to jazz in writing? Yes or no. Thank you also for the information that minutes are not kept. Please forgive me but I fail to see how a conversation is logged and yet not minuted and somehow informs a strategic approach or inform anyone who was not at that meeting.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins

[chris.hodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@gmail.com)

**Redacted<redacted@artscouncil.org. 06/12/2016**

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your reply.

As my colleagues have stated, there is no specific standalone document that categorically outlines our sole strategic approach to jazz.

[Our ten year strategic framework Achieving Great Art and Culture for everyone](#) details our overall strategic approach to the art forms that we support, with jazz falling under this remit. The [Arts Council England Corporate Plan 2015-18 Artform appendices: Music](#) highlights that under Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries we will aim to “extend talent pathways and opportunities in jazz and urban music, and develop new youth programmes in folk music.”

I must clarify that within our role as the national development agency for the arts, we are the sole National Lottery funding and public funding distributor for this purpose. Therefore, detailing the increase in funding over this time does demonstrate our strategic approach to jazz as an artform. The long term approach is the continued aim to support and promote jazz through our funding, welcoming applicants for these purposes, particularly those as mentioned within our Corporate Plan 2015-18. Both of the documents that I have included above are used by our Relationship Managers to ensure they are aware of our focuses and aims when appraising applications and making decisions. Additionally, they use these goals as a marker when having developmental conversations with the sector and applicants for our funding.

I apologise if it appeared that I was treating your correspondence as a potential complaint against the organisation’s processes and procedures, or the initial processing of our Freedom of Information request. This was certainly not my intention. I included this information to address what options were available to you going forward.

It is for this very same reason that I encouraged you to contact the Assistant for the team specialising in music in London. As we do not have the specific documents that

you are looking for, there may be other suitable information that you may find helpful.

You may note within [our Making a Complaint document](#) that the Ombudsman does not normally investigate complaints if they have not been through our complaints procedures first.

Ultimately, it is an interpretation based on the choice of language within the speech that Althea delivered, and for this reason we cannot provide any more help. I feel that my colleagues and I have attempted to clarify these points, and therefore as acknowledged in my initial response we will not make any further comment on the matter.

Kind regards,

**Redacted**  
**Complaints Manager, Customer Services**  
**Arts Council England**

0161 934 4322  
0845 300 6200

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [<mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** 23 December 2016 22:36

**To:** Chief Executive

**Subject:** Raising a complaint

Dear Mr Henley

I am writing to you to raise a complaint. I read a news report that the Arts Council published on the 12th September on the Arts Council website and announced at the launch of the London Jazz Festival that stated:

“Our long term, strategic approach to the form (jazz) has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues, including **Redacted** who many of you will know. Our approach will mean a stronger future for Jazz; greater resilience, a stronger focus on talent development and progression, and new audiences.”

I made an inquiry to the Freedom of Information Department at the Arts Council and asked for the following:

“I would be grateful if the Arts Council could provide me with the concrete, explicit document that states Arts Council England's ‘long term strategic approach to the form’ Also I would be grateful if the Arts Council would provide records of the conversations that the Arts Council has had with the ‘sector’ that helped develop this long term strategy.”

For the avoidance of doubt a strategic approach involves the following steps:

Step 1 - Define the strategic goal.

Step 2 - Define the different “means” to achieve the strategic goal.

Step 3 - Define alternative strategies with the “means” prioritized.

Step 4 - Facilitate choice of strategy

The correspondence is attached to this email. The conclusion of this correspondence is that it is clear “There is no stand-alone strategy for any sub-genre of music”, and again from Ms Rockwood’s correspondence, “...there is no stand-alone document that categorically outlines

our sole strategic approach to jazz." This regrettably makes the Arts Council's statement about a "long term approach" to jazz misleading.

With regard to the phrase "Our long term, strategic approach to the form (jazz) has been shaped by many conversations between the sector and my colleagues", it was stated in answer to my F o I request that "Our conversations with organisations and individuals are noted and logged, as we have described." I asked for copies of the minutes of the conversations but these were not supplied, which suggests that no record of the content or outcomes of these conversations are kept. The conclusion that can be drawn from my inquiries is that as no minutes are kept of conversations or meetings, then the notion that they have informed a non-existent strategy is also misleading.

I wrote to Customer Services following the Arts Councils own procedures and the advice was not particularly clear as you will see from the correspondence attached. I am writing to you with my complaint as that is the next procedural step.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins  
[chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@googlemail.com)

Darren Henley <[Darren.Henley@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:Darren.Henley@artscouncil.org.uk)>

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to me

Dear Chris,

I appreciate you sharing your concerns you with me. Please be aware that I am unable to respond to this message using our formal complaints procedure as outlined within the 'Making a Complaint' information sheet. Our complaints procedure is designed to investigate and respond to issues about how we have treated an individual, organisation or funding application. I will however address your concerns here.

I understand from your correspondence that you are unhappy with the terminology that the previous Deputy Chief Executive Althea Efunshile included in a speech during the launch of the London Jazz festival, however I cannot agree that the phrase used was intentionally or deliberately misleading.

I am willing to accept that you may attach a specific meaning or set of criteria to this phrase however that is not truly reflective of its use or purpose in this context.

Within our role as the national development agency for the arts, we have an overarching commitment to the arts, including jazz, and our overall ten year strategic framework Great art and Culture for everyone encompasses this. This is referenced across the correspondence you have received, both from the FOI team and the Complaints manager, and I feel that the responses they have provided thus far have covered the points you have made.

I feel the Freedom of Information request you submitted was answered fully, and it has been clearly demonstrated how we manage conversations with the sector. I am sorry that you are disappointed with the way in which we manage these conversations, however I believe it would be an unfeasible and unnecessary stretch of our limited resources for each informal discussion with the sector to be recorded. The conversations our staff have with our stakeholders are frequent and contribute to their knowledge and expertise. We rely on this expertise alongside data and research to achieve our strategic aims. Our focus is on ensuring the sector feels supported, and we reflect on the successes of this through where we invest our funds. If through our research and data into the sector we identify that jazz is underrepresented across any of our funding streams, we will take appropriate measures to resolve this.

We will continue to support jazz artists and organisations through our strategic funding streams and through our open funding stream Grants for the Arts. We are proud of our history and continued work in supporting Jazz in England and we look forward to continuing that work.

I feel that we have answered your questions and concerns to the best of our abilities and now consider this matter to be closed. If you have any further queries then please direct them to the Customer Services team on 0845 300 6200 or [enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk) who will be happy to assist you.

Kind regards,  
Darren

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**Darren Henley OBE**  
Chief Executive

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**Arts Council England**

**From:** Chris Hodgkins [mailto:[chrishodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chrishodgkins3@gmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 11, 2017 12:07 PM  
**To:** Darren Henley  
**Subject:** Re: Raising a complaint

Dear Mr Henley

Thank you for your response. I followed the Arts Councils Complaints procedure and when I raised my complaint with the Customer Services Team I went to some length to ensure that my complaint was not about the Freedom of Information request and that the Freedom of Information Team had dealt with my request in a reasonable and timely manner. It might be useful to revisit the correspondence for the avoidance of doubt. For the further avoidance of doubt and for the record I did not say the "*phrase used was intentionally or deliberately misleading*". I said the statements were misleading. Regrettably your reply does not resolve my complaint and I shall be taking the matter further.

Yours sincerely

Chris Hodgkins  
[chris.hodgkins3@gmail.com](mailto:chris.hodgkins3@gmail.com)