

CABINET

23 July 2013

Title: "Creative Barking and Dagenham": An Arts Strategy for the Borough 2013-16	
Report of the Leader of the Council	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes
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Accountable Divisional Director: Paul Hogan, Divisional Director, Culture and Sport	
Accountable Director: Anne Bristow, Corporate Director, Adult and Community Services	
Summary The purpose of the strategy is to provide a shared vision and a framework for the delivery and promotion of arts in the Borough over the next three years. It has been informed by and will support the achievement of the community priorities set out in the Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan.	
Recommendation(s) The Cabinet is recommended to approve the Arts Strategy 2013 - 2016 as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.	
Reason(s) The creative arts can contribute to a number of council priorities: creating employment, supporting economic regeneration, providing opportunities for children to succeed and be valued as well as supporting programmes to improve health and wellbeing.	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The arts are a great success story for Britain: providing nearly 1 million jobs and contributing £28 billion every year to the UK economy. It is estimated that every £1 spent by councils on the arts brings in up to £4 more in additional funding.
- 1.2 As well as helping our economy by creating jobs, the arts can support young people to realise their potential, enrich our lives and broaden our perspectives. They strengthen the distinctive identity of our Borough. They provide learning opportunities for all ages and abilities and support the delivery of health and social care. The arts can break down barriers between people and create a sense of community.

- 1.3 Our Borough has a long history of association with artists who have gone on to become household names like Vera Lynn, Billy Bragg, Dudley Moore and Sandie Shaw as well as more contemporary artists like grime rapper, Devlin, and singer songwriter, Jessie J. There is also strong tradition of arts participation in Barking and Dagenham and many people enjoy the varied range of arts activities which now abound in the Borough: whether this is watching our talented young people performing in school, playing in a band or youth orchestra, attending the Mela or St. George's Day celebrations, taking part in a youth theatre, seeing a show at the Broadway theatre or a dance performance in Barking town square.
- 1.4 However, the arts in the Borough also face a number of challenges. Some sections of our community rarely get involved in the arts, cuts in funding are affecting what we can do and there is scope for better co-ordination of the work of all partners. We need to be more ambitious as a Borough and better focused on what can be achieved by working more closely together.
- 1.5 While the arts will not solve all the Borough's challenges, a coordinated and collaborative approach to arts provision in the Borough, focussed on a shared agenda, should play an important part in helping to make Barking and Dagenham an even better place to live, work, study and visit.

2. Proposals and Issues

- 2.1 While there is an extraordinary array of arts activity happening across the Borough, much of it outside the realms of traditional notions of arts and culture, there is still evidence that not as many people as could be are benefitting from the huge range of individual and community benefits that the arts bring. The arts should be available to everyone as part of the journey they go through in life – whether learning an instrument at school, helping to build a sustainable career in the creative industries, mastering digital photography or taking part in a tea dance.
- 2.2 In order to build on our track record and to address the challenges we have identified, we have set out a shared vision for everyone involved in the delivery and promotion of the arts in the Borough.
- 2.3 The overarching aim of this strategy is *“To increase engagement and participation in arts and creative activity across all Barking and Dagenham's communities – ensuring all residents are given the opportunity and encouragement to take part”*.
- 2.4 We have identified five priorities where the Council and its partners will focus efforts over the life of the strategy:
- **Economic prosperity** – we will support the delivery of the Borough regeneration strategy by creating a vibrant cultural sector so that residents have access to pathways into a creative job.
 - **Skills, capacity and future talents** – we will support the achievement of the community strategy priority to ensure that every child is valued so they can succeed by enabling our young people to benefit from a creative education and to have the opportunity to develop their talent.
 - **Health and well being** – we will use the arts to support the delivery of the Borough Health and Wellbeing Strategy by helping local people to lead healthy

lives by improving self confidence and reducing isolation as well as promoting fitness and good mental health.

- **Place and community** – we will lead the way in introducing new ways for the arts to connect with people and helping to make the Borough a place all communities feel a part of.
- **Partnership and collaboration** – we will put in place the right structures, networks and knowledge sharing so that the arts can play an even more effective role in Barking and Dagenham.

- 2.5 The draft version of the strategy and the proposed improvement priorities is attached at Appendix one and has been set out in a 'plan on a page' type of format for internal use. A more detailed version of the strategy which will be used with partners and stakeholders as well as for external funding bids is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.6 If adopted by Cabinet, it is intended to make the strategy available in an electronic format only.

Resourcing the strategy

- 2.7 The draft strategy clearly sets out that the Council's funding for the arts will reduce over the next three years. As part of the measures taken to enable a balanced budget to be set for 2014/15, the decision has been taken to cut the arts and events team budget and the four associated posts. However, a budget of £40,000 has been retained to provide the necessary match funding for the Creative People and Places programme.
- 2.8 Council funding for the Broadway theatre and the Community Music Service has also been maintained.
- 2.9 The reality of the Council's reduced capacity and resources for the arts has directly shaped the development of the strategy and the proposed improvement priorities.
- 2.10 Improving efficiency and effectiveness across the arts sector to deliver the same or greater quality and range of services for the same level of expenditure will be critical to the success of the strategy. To deliver the programmes and activities identified in the strategy, a case will be made for other funding streams to be directed towards the priorities.
- 2.11 There will also be a continued focus over the life of the strategy and beyond to secure funding from other sources working in partnership with local, sub-regional and national agencies. A good example of what can be achieved in this respect is the aforementioned funding from Arts Council England's Creative People and Places programme. The bid, led by a consortium of local arts and community organisations and the Council has secured funding of £840,000 to be spent over the next three years in getting more local people participating in the arts.

3. Options appraisal

- 3.1 The options available to Cabinet are to approve the strategy and improvement priorities (with any direction on amendments to be made) or to reject it.
- 3.2 Not to approve the strategy would mean that there is no strategic framework to drive improvements in the service, which would also impact on the ability to lever in external funding to support service delivery.
- 3.3 Therefore, Members are recommended to adopt the strategy and improvement action plan with any amendments, removals, or additions as they consider appropriate.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The development of the strategy has been informed by consultation with various groups including: Barking and Dagenham College; Arc Theatre; Studio 3 Arts; Green Shoes; Barking and Dagenham Cultural Education Partnership; Barking and Dagenham Creative People and Places programme board; the Creative Industries Quarter steering group; and Arts Council England.

5. Financial implications

Implications completed by: Dawn Calvert (Group Manager, Finance)

- 5.1 The controllable budget for Arts Development in 2013/14 is £86,800 to support the councils' art strategy. This is allocated as follows.

	£
Staff	47,800
Non-Staff	39,000
Total	86,800

- 5.2 This allocation is subject to change through the council's annual budget process.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Paul Feild, Senior Governance Solicitor

- 6.1 As with all Council services there is a legal requirement to have due regard to access and that an ongoing Equalities Impact Assessment is maintained pursuant to the Equality Act 2010 to ensure there is the widest participation and engagement that can be achieved by the strategy for all the community in the promotion of the arts.

7. Other Implications

- 7.1 **Staffing Issues** - The Council's support for the delivery of the strategy has been shaped by a previous decision to cut the arts and events teams (four posts) and related operational budgets in 2014/15.

7.2 **Risk Management** - The action plan for the strategy will be incorporated into the Culture and Sport annual service plan. Any risks associated with the successful implementation of the service plan are set out in the divisional risk register, which is reviewed by the Adult and Community Services Departmental Management Team on a quarterly basis.

7.3 **Customer Impact** - An equality impact assessment has been produced to inform the development of this strategy. It is expected that there will be a marked increase in the number and range of people who will be engaging with the arts over the life of the strategy. In particular, there will be a focus on the following:

- the development of cultural events that promote mutual understanding and respect amongst the Borough's different communities.
- projects which support creative pathways for young people into work in the creative and cultural sector or to higher education.
- activities that promote good mental health
- more opportunities for older people and pre-school age children to get involved in the arts.
- every primary school child in the Borough to have one visit to Valence House Museum or Eastbury Manor House, one visit to a local library, and one experience of a theatre, music or dance performance over the life of this strategy.

7.4 **Safeguarding Children** - A clear focus for the strategy is to improve access to the arts by children and families and to support the delivery of a creative education for every child in the Borough. There will also be an extensive programme of positive and diversionary activities provided for young people.

All arts provision delivered directly or commissioned by the Culture and Sport division will be covered by its safeguarding policy framework for children and vulnerable adults.

7.5 **Health Issues** – One of the priorities identified in the strategy is to harness the as yet untapped potential of the arts to improve the health and well being of local people. The strategy proposes to develop more opportunities for people to come together to socialise and to take an active part in the community through volunteering.

Targeted programmes will also be developed to support local people to lead healthy lives by improving self confidence and reducing isolation as well as promoting fitness and good mental health.

7.6 **Crime and Disorder Issues** - The Council has a statutory duty to consider crime and disorder implications in all its decision making. In delivering this strategy and action plan, the Council will be providing quality facilities and activities, which will provide positive activities for all residents and, in particular, opportunities for families to enjoy their leisure time together.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

The links to other strategies and plans that have informed the development of this report are set out in section six of the draft strategy.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – “Plan on a page” Creative Barking and Dagenham: An Arts Strategy for Barking and Dagenham 2013-16

Appendix 2 – Creative Barking and Dagenham: An Arts Strategy for Barking and Dagenham 2013-16