



## Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee

21 February 2017

<b>Title</b>	<b>Promoting arts and culture in Barnet</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Commissioning Director, Children and Young People
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	None
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### Summary

Barnet is a large, diverse and growing borough and residents enjoy a broad range of arts and cultural opportunities, both those located in Barnet and through access to the opportunities afforded from being part of the capital city. This report sets out ways in which the council is currently promoting and supporting arts and culture in the borough and proposes that the council works in partnership with others to develop a strategic framework to shape the future development of arts and culture in the borough. A strategic framework will help to ensure that Barnet continues to be a vibrant and thriving place to live and that it is well poised to seize future opportunities that arise to develop arts and culture, either locally or as part of a wider London offer.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee note what Barnet is doing to promote culture and arts in the borough.**
- 2. That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee approve the approach for the development of a strategic framework for arts and culture in Barnet as set out in paragraph 1.24 and for the ongoing support for arts and culture as set out in paragraph 1.25.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 This report advises the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee of the work currently undertaken by the council to support arts and culture within the borough as requested by the Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016 (see paragraph 1.8 below). It proposes the development of a strategy to provide a framework for the activities undertaken by the council, partner organisations and the numerous other voluntary sector organisations and individuals who work in the borough to ensure the Barnet continues to be a vibrant and thriving place to live.

#### **Context**

- 1.2 As set out in the council's corporate plan, Barnet is a large, diverse and growing borough. Overall, most of its residents enjoy a successful and healthy life, with many families choosing it as a great place to raise their family. A wide range of services and amenities support this success and overall, residents are well served by both local services and by those provided for London as a whole. The infrastructure that provides, for example, green open spaces, public transport and health services are not constrained by borough boundaries and many residents make use of services across north London, Hertfordshire and central London. Arts and cultural activities and infrastructure is similarly utilised, with a plethora of local 'home-grown' activity and facilities in Barnet alongside the world class facilities offered in central London, which as the capital city hosts a range of national and world leading cultural facilities, activities and festivities.
- 1.3 All London boroughs benefit from the cultural and artistic energy that comes from being part of a creative capital city and finding ways to ensure that all Londoners have an opportunity to benefit is realised through a mix of improving access to existing opportunities and providing the right conditions for local cultural and arts activities and facilities to grow, flourish and be sustained.
- 1.4 In Barnet, there is already a lot to celebrate. This report contains examples of arts and cultural activities, services and facilities that take place here, many of which have developed over time through the inspiration and creativity of Barnet residents. Overall, Barnet residents have access to high quality education; there is good community cohesion and the voluntary sector is

supported by a strong ethos among the community to volunteer and help each other.

- 1.5 The times of generous grant-giving by government, the GLA, individual boroughs or national arts organisation are long gone and the financial climate becomes ever more challenging for public sector organisations. The council helps to support arts and cultural activities through its day to day work in providing a wide range of services to residents, businesses and organisations and it has retained some small grant giving facilities, described below. Increasingly, the role of local authorities is to establish a vision and framework within which residents, organisations and other service providers can shape the services residents need and want.
- 1.6 Barnet is well placed to take advantage of developments that the new Mayor of London may want to introduce as he develops his new cultural strategy for London. For example, the new Brent Cross regeneration proposals provide an opportunity to showcase Barnet to ensure that the transport and housing benefits it will bring can attract arts and cultural opportunities to serve this part of London. This report is the first step in developing a new arts and culture strategy for Barnet that will set out the opportunities in Barnet and how the council's corporate plan to promote opportunity, responsibility and fairness can support its residents, partner organisations and the voluntary sector to continue to ensure that Barnet's cultural richness continues to develop and thrive.
- 1.7 At its meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016, the Children's, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee resolved that the Commissioning Director, Children and Young People, bring a report back to a future meeting of the committee which details the following:
  - *The possible development of a cultural activities plan which could include: making a dedicated page on the internet for cultural activities, promoting the arts through the council's magazine Barnet First and how the arts can be incorporated in future meeting agendas.*
  - *Suggestions of how to involve residents and community groups in cultural activities.*
  - *Feasibility of the council appointing an artist-in-residence and/or an 'Arts Champion' to be an ambassador for arts in the borough.*
  - *Whether community spaces can be offered at discounted rates across the borough to community groups (for instance spaces in libraries). This will include a definitive view on the current – and any potential future – rates available for community groups.*
- 1.8 At its meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> of December 2016, the Council considered and passed a motion that stated:

*A Cultural Strategy for Barnet Council believes that culture and the arts enriches lives, inspires learning and education, boosts economic growth, attracts investment, helps build communities and strengthens community cohesion by celebrating diversity. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has said he plans to "democratise the arts" in the capital, so that Zone 1 should not "hog the best arts and culture in our city". Council notes that Barnet has a rich cultural heritage and history, and is one of the best placed boroughs to demonstrate what outer-London can offer. Barnet has vibrant community festivals in East Barnet and East Finchley; museum space at the RAF Museum, Avenue House and Barnet Museum; an English Heritage registered battlefield where the Battle of Barnet was fought during the Wars of the Roses; 2,155 listed buildings, objects or structures considered to be of special architectural or historic interest; 4 registered historic parks and gardens; amateur and professional theatres such as the artsdepot, Finchley Youth Theatre, The Bull Theatre, The Incognito Theatre and The Garden Suburb Theatre, and Community Focus who has a long history of engaging with young people and those with disabilities through the arts. Barnet also has other venues hosting arts events within the borough and on our borders such as The Phoenix Cinema, The Hampstead Garden suburb Institute and Chicken Shed Theatre. This list is not exhaustive, but shows the breadth of Barnet's cultural offer. Council believes that investing some time and effort into developing a cultural strategy for Barnet could help meet council policy objectives across all themed committees, as well as improve the Borough's standing in London, nationally and internationally. Council also believes that a proper cultural strategy for the borough could help position Barnet to be a future London Borough of Culture. Council therefore requests that the CELS Committee works with partners including schools, Barnet College, Middlesex University, Barnet Borough Arts Council and local businesses to develop a Cultural Strategy for Barnet. As a first step, Council asks that the CELS Committee receives a report at the next committee meeting detailing*

- What LB Barnet is doing to promote culture and the arts in the borough, and*
- How LB Barnet is engaging with arts and heritage groups in the borough, the Arts Council and the Mayor of London to promote Barnet as a cultural centre.*

### **What Barnet Council is doing to promote culture and arts in the borough**

- 1.9 As set out in the council motion, Barnet has a rich and broad arts and culture offer. The motion lists many of the borough's key cultural facilities that illustrate this, many of which also attract a significant number of visitors to the borough such as the artsdepot and RAF Museum. Many of the organisations that help to provide this breadth are part of the very fabric of Barnet and engage in numerous ways with the council, receiving council services, contributing to shared aims and objectives and participating in partnership structures.

From the top of the council organisation down to the frontline, there are many partnership structures and opportunities for partnership working that help to provide and support a wide range of services, e.g. in children services, adults,

and health services. The voluntary sector in particular utilise arts and culture opportunities to help support Barnet families and residents to learn, to develop and to remain healthy.

- 1.10 The newly organised Barnet Partnership Board chaired by the Leader of the Council, comprising of Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group, CommUNITY Barnet, Barnet and Southgate College, Middlesex University, Brent Cross shopping centre, Metropolitan Police, Job Centre Plus, Groundwork London, Federation of Small Businesses, West London Business, Argent Related and Saracens, provides a new opportunity to focus and harness the partnership effort, energy and capacity to promote arts and culture in the borough. Arts and Culture will be one of five themes for the work of this partnership over the coming year.
- 1.11 Many of Barnet's elected members promote and support a wide range of activities and events and serve on local governance bodies of organisations. Through these channels, they personally champion and support arts and culture events and activities in their wards and across the borough. The administration directs the funding and priorities of council spending and below are some examples of the range of council services that work year round to promote and support residents, partners and voluntary groups in Barnet. It is not an exhaustive list but illustrates the way in which arts and culture are part and parcel of what the council does.
- 1.12 **Vibrant town centres** as places for arts and culture to flourish are supported through events in parks, street closures for street parties, opportunities for art/sculpture in the public realm and events organised through the council's Town Teams. The Burnt Oak Town Centre project for example, has promoted arts and culture through activities that 'celebrate forgotten heritage' and 'vibrant not messy', street murals; supporting traders to improve shop displays and creating welcoming community spaces. Local Traders have received support to promote cultural events including the Burnt Oak Multi-Cultural Festival and a Burnt Oak Festive Fair. Support for flexible and low cost space for community activities in town centres offers another example e.g. grant aid to 10 Grand Arcade in North Finchley.
- 1.13 Key **community arts, events and festivals** receive financial assistance through the council's grant programme; East Barnet Community Festival in July, East Finchley Arts Festival in October; the Barnet Christmas Fayre in December and the Barnet Unity of Faiths Festival. Other examples of funded projects include Art Reach, SAAM Theatre Company, the Larches Community and 'Together We Create', a filmmaking project for young people recording the regeneration of Cricklewood from a young person's perspective.
- 1.14 The council's website **promotes arts and culture opportunities for residents**; hosting information about local events, including festivals, arts and cultural activities: <https://barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/events>. The council has recently developed the Barnet Community Directory, an online directory of services across voluntary and community sector, many of whom offer a range of cultural and arts activities in the borough. The council's strategy unit is developing new methods of supporting organisations to raise funds for civic

projects e.g. piloting the use of *Spacehive* an online platform to **empower people to create and fund projects** which matter to them and to work with partners, local businesses and contractors to encourage funding pots to be made available to local communities.

- 1.15 **Arts and culture infrastructure** is supported to be sustainable through the council's community asset tool that recognises the contribution of voluntary and community organisations in determining rental/lease charges. Where possible, the council also completes lease arrangements for council owned buildings to maximise the chance of an organisation obtaining grant funding (e.g. Barnet Museum and the artsdepot in relation to funding from the Arts Council.) The council also supports new public art works where appropriate and has recently provided workspace for the completion of a new public artwork at Finchley Memorial Hospital
- 1.16 The council's investment in **regeneration and growth** is providing new schools, health facilities, libraries and other community based facilities that provide an infrastructure for local communities to establish and flourish. For example, in Colindale, a new library has been opened, co-located with new Barnet and Southgate College facilities and several local Barnet voluntary sector organisations and a new community hub located adjacent to Heybourne Park will offer services for young children, young adults and facilities for local voluntary groups to use and hire. In areas undergoing regeneration, community arts, festivals and cultural events are organised through local community or resident groups (e.g. the Colindale Communities Trust). A range of similar new community facilities are planned at each regeneration scheme and an example of how the facilities support a thriving local community range of activities is the opening in summer 2016 of One Stonegrove, a partnership trust - <http://sct.london/about-onestonegrove/>. Barnet Homes delivers a range of community engagement activities across its housing portfolio which include supporting community centres, community and tenant groups, events such as Urban Gamez and outdoor film nights, support for a Love Burnt Oak exhibition of photos of high street shop owners.
- 1.17 The council commissions **support to voluntary and community organisations** through CommUNITY Barnet, Volunteering Barnet (Groundwork) and the Communities Together Network. Together this infrastructure offers advice and support for organisations to establish, become sustainable and attract volunteers for the many and varied range of activities and services offered in the sector, including many that provide arts and cultural opportunities to residents across all age ranges.
- 1.18 Council's services for **children and young people** include the administration of child licenses for performing arts; the provision range of positive activities for young people including Finchley Youth Theatre and Canada Villa; funding of trips and activities for looked after children; partnership work with the boroughs schools which provide arts and cultural opportunities for their 57,000 pupils; capital investment in art and drama facilities in schools (new theatre in Orion primary school); health and safety system for school trips; promotion of arts competitions, events and activities in libraries including visiting authors, summer reading challenge, regular books groups

(<https://open.barnet.gov.uk/dataset?tags=Libraries>). The new Partnership Libraries will provide further opportunities for locally based organisations to utilise the space for arts and cultural activities to respond to local needs. Music services for Barnet's children and young people are provided through Barnet Education and Arts Trust, created as an independent charity from the council's music service.

- 1.19 Local arts and cultural activities are part of council commissioned services to support opportunities for **vulnerable adults**; groups to help support older residents for example promoting dementia screening/events at the Phoenix, artsdepot, RAF museum: promoting art and cultural events through prevention support, social care connect and engagement events including Silver Sunday. The Altogether Better scheme arranges regular cinema trips, reading groups, trips to local landmarks, and the men's shed; sheltered housing putting on films / virtual tours of museums etc.
- 1.20 Entrepreneurial Barnet, the council's strategy to **support and promote businesses to grow** in Barnet, including **creative industries**, sets out a range of activities and ways in which the council is helping local businesses to establish and succeed. <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/business/Entrepreneurial-Barnet.html>.

### **Arts and culture in London, the Arts Council and the Mayor of London**

- 1.21 The Mayor of London has made culture a priority and is establishing a Cultural Leadership Board to lead and deliver a new cultural strategy for London. In his manifesto, the Mayor set out a number of ambitions he would like to achieve and has since made clear his intention for all of London, including outer London to benefit from the opportunities that arts and culture offer. London Council's co-ordinates a Culture Forum for London boroughs (funded in part by the Arts Council) to lead discussion around emerging policy areas where arts and culture is essential to drive change and growth; to share information and best practice; to identify areas for cross borough collaboration; to build links between the arts/cultural sector and wider policy areas creating opportunities for cultural commissioning and to support advocacy work for local arts and culture services.

In relation to Arts Council funding, the council has submitted bids when the opportunity has arisen – for example, the new four Partnership Libraries that will be in place from April 2017 have recently submitted a joint bid for funding to develop community engagement and new services in each locality.

### **Developing an arts and culture strategy for Barnet**

- 1.22 The above sections demonstrate that Barnet hosts a diverse range of arts and cultural opportunities for its residents, many of whom will also benefit and make use of the wider opportunities that come from being part of the country's capital.
- 1.23 Many of the local opportunities, activities and events that residents enjoy are driven by independent organisations, charities, residents, community and voluntary sector organisations and do not rely on the council directing or

commissioning activity and services. However, Barnet will want to ready to exploit any opportunities to attract investment or activity that may arise from the Mayor of London's new vision. To do this, and to help further promote and sustain arts and cultural activities in the borough, it is proposed to develop a strategic framework for arts and culture in the borough. It is important to note that within the council's medium term financial strategy it is not proposed to divert funding from other essential council services to establish a specific, ring fenced arts and culture budget. This report has set out the ways in which the council helps to support arts and culture and this approach will continue, albeit within the constrained resources available to the council. In the course of developing a strategic framework, it is likely that other ways for the council to support arts and culture will emerge (e.g. through social media innovations) or for existing support services to be reviewed and where possible within resource constraints, these will be considered.

1.24 To develop a strategic framework for the promotion of arts and culture in the borough it is proposed to;

- host a conference for all interested parties currently working and offering services in Barnet
- establish a partnership working group to steer the development of the strategic framework to be presented to the Children's, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding committee in the summer term.

1.25 In the meantime, the opportunity will be taken to:

- Continue to promote arts and culture through the day to day work of the council and offer support for resident led events (e.g. festivals, street events, pop ups etc.).
- Reflect the contribution that arts, culture and other creative industries can play when reviewing key council strategies (egg Local Plan)
- Champion arts and culture through the new Barnet Partnership, chaired by the Leader of the Council.
- Explore ways to attract additional funding opportunities to support the development of arts and cultural activities.
- Review the council's web pages to ensure that there are opportunities for arts and culture activities to be promoted.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 This report responds to a motion passed by Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016, and a Member's Item raised by Councilor Anne Hutton at the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee 2016.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

3.1 The alternative option is not to develop a strategic framework for arts and culture. Whilst this option would not be detrimental to the current provision, it

may reduce the opportunity for Barnet to seize future opportunities that may arise.

- 3.2 A request was made in the Member's Item in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton to examine the possibility of launching an *Artist in Residence* scheme in the borough. Some organisations, such as galleries, appoint an *Artist in Residence* to promote the arts and there are some examples of projects such as Crossrail, who appointed an *Artist in Residence* to make a pictorial diary of the project's development. The aims of *Artist in Residence* programmes are usually tailored to the organisation running the scheme and are usually funded, either by providing an allowance to the representative or allocating money to events by the organisation running them.
- 3.3 Several local municipal councils in Australia run *Artist in Residence* schemes on an annual basis, no examples of local authorities in Britain that have appointed an *Artist in Residence* have yet been identified. There would likely be cost implications if the council wished to appoint an *Artist in Residence*, such as providing dedicated space, staff support hours and financial incentive for the scheme. Due to this, it is not recommended that the council appoint an *Artist in Residence* at this stage.
- 3.4 The Members item also requested that the council consider whether community spaces can be offered at discounted rates across the borough to community groups (for instance spaces in libraries). The community asset tool now in place recognises the contribution of voluntary sector and other partner organisations when setting the terms of rental or lease agreements. It is not recommended to introduce a further differential rate system for more ad-hoc letting arrangements, such as room hire. As seen above, there are a myriad ways for promoting arts and culture and establishing a system to distinguish the aims and activities of the large number and different types of organisations that hire council facilities on an ad-hoc basis would be overly onerous. Furthermore, some services (such as the library service) rely on income from ad-hoc room hire and any reduction in this income would need to be met from elsewhere.

#### **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

See paragraphs 1.24 and 1.25 above

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

##### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 Barnet's continuing success as a place where people want to live, work and study is a key aim of the Council's corporate plan. A thriving arts and culture offer supports this ambition and contributes to:

- Barnet's children and young people receiving a great start in life
- Public Health being integrated as a priority theme across all services
- A broad offer of skills and employment programmes

- Barnet's parks and green spaces being amongst the best in London
- Barnet being among the safest places in London, with high levels of community cohesion, and residents feeling safe.

Working with partner organisations and residents to achieve this, the councils aim is for:

- **Fairness:** striking the right balance between more frequent users of services and fairness to the wider taxpayer, making sure all residents benefit from opportunities for growth.
- **Responsibility:** where all parts of the public service system play their part in helping to achieve priority outcomes with reduced resources.
- **Opportunity:** the council will capitalise on the opportunities of a growing economy by prioritising regeneration, growth and maximising income

## **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 The development of the framework to be bought forward for consideration by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee will be financed from within existing resources. Any resource implications of the framework itself will be considered in the future report.

5.2.2 The report has set out the myriad of ways in which arts and culture activities are supported and promoted in the delivery of council services. These are funded from within core council service budgets. There are also examples in the report of where the council has sought opportunities to bid for additional funding opportunities and this approach will continue.

## **5.3 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.3.1 As set out in the Responsibility For functions (Annex A) of the Council's Constitution (Section 15a), the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee has responsibility to lead the Council's responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 and Education and inspection Act 2007.

5.3.2 Responsibility for Functions, Annex A, of the Council's Constitution also states that the committee has responsibility for the development of cultural activities.

## **5.4 Risk Management**

5.4.1 None.

## **5.5 Equalities and Diversity**

5.5.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other

conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010; advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; foster good relations between people from different groups.

5.5.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

5.5.3 The equality implications of the framework will be brought to the attention of the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee for consideration.

## 5.6 **Consultation and Engagement**

It is proposed to hold a conference/workshop for partner organisations in Barnet to

## 6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Opposition Motion in the name of Councillor Kath McGuirk to Full Council, 13th December 2016:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s36655/Opposition%20motion%20-%20Cllr%20Kath%20McGuirk.pdf>

6.2 Member's Item in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton – Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee, 23rd March 2016:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s30707/Members%20Item%20-%20Councillor%20Anne%20Hutton.pdf>