

MEETING: Barnet Partnership Board	Date: 18 th October 2017	ITEM No: 3
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REPORT OF:
Leader of the Council

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE OF REPORT:

1. Noting the progress on the emerging arts and culture strategy, the Board is invited to put forward ideas and proposals for contributions towards increasing arts and culture opportunities in the borough.
2. The Board is asked to endorse the proposal to bid to become a London Borough of Culture in 2021 or 2022 and note that no bid will be made in this round.

INPUT REQUESTED FROM BARNET PARTNERSHIP BOARD:

To note the work being undertaken and to identify any further opportunities

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Overview

This paper describes the work underway to develop an arts and culture strategy for Barnet. It invites contributions from the Board in relation to ideas and proposals towards increasing arts and culture opportunities in the borough. It also outlines the Greater London Authority's programme to identify a London Borough of Culture for 2019 and for 2020.

Context

Overall, most of the borough's residents enjoy a successful and healthy life. Residents have access to a plethora of local arts and cultural opportunities as well to the cultural and artistic energy that comes from being part of a creative capital city offering world class cultural facilities, activities and festivities.

In February 2017¹, the Council's Children's, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee considered a report that set out the wide range of local arts and cultural opportunities in the borough. The Committee commissioned the development of an arts and culture strategy to provide a framework for the development of activities undertaken by the council, partner organisations and the numerous other voluntary sector organisations and individuals who work in the borough. The purpose of the framework is

¹ Children, Education, Libraries Committee 21 February 2017, item 12:
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=697&MIId=8689&Ver=4>

to harness and promote energy and resources through establishing a shared vision, priorities and some key activities across the partnership of key organisations operating in the borough. As a result, the Barnet Partnership Board adopted arts and culture as one of its five themes for 2017/18 as a basis for working together.

Developing the strategy

The development of the strategy is being led by the council along with Middlesex University and the artsdepot. As a first step, a workshop co-hosted by the three organisations was held at Middlesex University in July, attended by around 40 representatives of different organisations working in Barnet. At this workshop, participants considered the benefits that arts and culture can bring to the borough as well as how, through working in partnership, these benefits could be delivered. A further workshop is arranged for the 9th November 2017 to agree the vision and priorities. This will again be co-hosted by the council, Middlesex University and the artsdepot.

It is proposed that the strategy is a 'partnership strategy' endorsed by member organisations of the Board and that the strategy will be in place early in 2018.

Contributions the council could bring to the table

As part of its day to day operations, the council already undertakes a wide range of activities that support the development of arts and culture in the borough, for example through its parks, libraries, children's and adult's services, small grants programme and support for the artsdepot. More recently, it has launched Barnet Together, a project run in partnership with Spacehive, a crowdfunding platform for community projects. However, whilst acknowledging the financial constraints facing local authorities, we need to explore whether there is more the council could do through a sharper focus, better use of resources and working more effectively in partnership with others. Some examples include:

- **Regeneration:** A potential focus is the role of arts and culture in supporting the regeneration and growth plans for the borough. With thousands of households moving into the borough creating new communities through regeneration, arts and culture has a potentially unique role in shaping and embedding communities as they develop within a borough with a very long and proud history. The council and its regeneration partners have an opportunity to ensure that there is a strong focus on the 'people' aspect of regeneration and that arts and culture features strongly in our approach to regeneration to ensure that communities are successfully established
- **Assets:** The council owns a number of properties that could be more actively promoted for local pop-ups, exhibitions etc or for use by local artists.
- **Town centres and high street renewal:** Through its work in town centres, building on the experience in Burnt Oak, an increased emphasis on arts and culture opportunities across town centres could generate more local energy and creativity – for example the use of public spaces, street markets, pop up events.

The Greater London Authority is inviting bids from London Boroughs as part of a process to identify a London Borough of Culture for 2019 and for 2020.

The deadline for application for both years is 1st December 2017. Bids have to be well developed and demonstrate strong partnerships across arts and cultural organisations, local businesses, education, public sector, voluntary and civic orgs. Bids need to contain a costed programme of activity supported by the local community. A grant of up to £1.1m will be available for each successful borough, with a requirement for match funding of 30 per cent. £600k will be awarded to up to six individual exemplary projects for boroughs who submit unsuccessful bids.

The board is asked to note that no bid will be made in this round, Rather, we plan to bid for 2021 or 2022, using the opportunity of the Brent Cross regeneration as a catalyst. A key theme of the emerging arts and culture strategy will therefore be to get us into a position to submit a strong bid in a future round and therefore we do not intend to submit a bid this time.

Conclusion

1. Noting the progress on the emerging strategy, the Board is invited to put forward ideas and proposals for contributions towards increasing arts and culture opportunities in the borough.
2. The Board is asked to endorse the proposal to bid to become a London Borough of Culture in 2021 or 2022 and note that no bid will be made in this round.