



Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee

15th November 2017

Title	Promoting arts and culture in Barnet
Report of	Strategic Director for Children and Young People
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	None
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Summary

This report provides a progress report to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on the development of an arts and culture strategy for Barnet. It sets out the consultation undertaken to date and seeks agreement for the vision and priorities for the development of the strategy. It proposes the establishment of a time-limited council-funded resource to kick start the use of spaces for incidental and 'meanwhile uses' in the borough. Finally it sets out the ambition to work towards becoming the London Borough of Culture in 2021.

Recommendations

1. That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee note the partnership activity to date to develop a strategic framework for arts and culture.

2. That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee agree the vision and priorities for the further development of the strategy.
3. That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee agree to the use of council monies to fund a time limited resource of £25,000 to kick start the use of incidental and 'meanwhile use' space in the borough.
4. That the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee support the ambition to work towards becoming the London Borough of Culture in 2021

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 On the 21st February 2017, the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee considered a report that set out the work currently undertaken by the council to support arts and culture within the borough. The Committee agreed to 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.
- 1.2 Arts and Culture is also one of the five themes agreed by the Barnet Partnership, a partnership 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
- 1.3 This report sets out the progress to date in working in partnership with the wide range of organisations in the borough to develop a shared ambition and vision for arts and culture in the borough for the Committee's approval. While the strategy is in development, it proposes to proceed with the establishment of a time-limited resource to kick start the use of spaces for incidental and 'meanwhile uses' in the borough. Finally it sets out the ambition to work towards becoming the London Borough of Culture in 2021 and highlights some local and regional developments in relation to arts and culture

A. Developing the strategic framework

- 1.4 To begin to shape the local strategic framework, the council, Middlesex University and artsdepot has formed a small working group to lead and steer the engagement with the local arts and culture community. This three way partnership group is helping to ensure that the leadership of the local approach is embedded and a shared endeavour reflecting that a thriving local arts and culture environment relies on a vast range of activity that together, creates a sense of richness and enjoyment for all.
- 1.5 As a first step, a workshop was held in July, co-hosted by the council, Middlesex University and artsdepot. The workshop was held at Middlesex

University campus and facilitated by an external, independent facilitator. The three lead organisations compiled an invitation list, based on known contacts and organisations working in the borough. Invitations were sent to over 100 individuals and organisations of which around 40 attended on the day.

- 1.6 The purpose of the workshop was to explore what arts and culture can bring to the borough of Barnet and how, through working together these benefits can be delivered.

- 1.7 **Workshop outcome: The contribution of arts and culture:** Participants identified a wide range of benefits that arts and culture brings to Barnet including:

- Creating cohesive communities, sharing and celebrating the diverse cultural communities in Barnet
- Supporting residents to gain skills to improve employability
- Providing jobs and employment in the arts and culture economy
- Helping improve health outcomes, for example through activities for the elderly, people at risk of isolation, people experiencing poor mental health
- Bringing joy and celebration through festivals, events etc
- Attracting people to the borough, bringing economic gain
- Revitalising town centres.

- 1.8 **Workshop outcome: Delivering the benefits/making it happen** Participants identified a number of opportunities to strengthen and develop a local arts and culture offer:

- **Borough identity/promotion:** Participants felt that more could be done to share what's already happening and to promote the offer within Barnet, celebrating success and shining a spotlight on successful events and activities. They welcomed the development of a strategy as a way to convey a more coherent picture of the arts and cultural life of the borough and to promote a stronger cultural identity to shift some of the perceptions people may have of the borough.
- **Spaces/physical:** many felt more could be done to make use of 'incidental' spaces across the borough to offer affordable space for exhibitions, activities, pop-ups etc to promote a 'buzz' in local areas.
- **Activities:** the festivals that take place in Barnet are popular and help to shape a local identity in parts of the borough that host them. Participants felt that more visible activities such as outdoor arts events, taster events etc would help to promote this benefit in other parts of the borough.
- **Infrastructure:** the large scale regeneration programmes in Barnet were seen as an opportunity to harness local industry and regeneration partners to work with key partners e.g. the council, Middlesex

University, artsdepot to promote the 'people' aspect of regeneration and to ensure that the infrastructure plans support a thriving cohesive community, bringing existing and new communities together to shape the place where they live.

- **Partnership/networking:** participants welcomed coming together and would welcome more opportunities to network, to share successes and to explore opportunities for partnership working.

1.9 **Consultation with the Barnet Partnership Board**

The outcome of the workshop led to the development of a draft vision and set of priorities to steer the strategy. This first draft of the vision and priorities was shared with the Barnet Partnership Board in October and the feedback from key partner organisations on the Board refined and shaped the vision and priorities set out below.

1.20 **Next steps for delivering the strategic approach:**

A further workshop is arranged for the 9th November, again to be co-hosted by the council, Middlesex University and artsdepot. The purpose of the second workshop is to develop the strategy based on the vision and priorities that have emerged from the consultation and engagement to date. Given the date of the workshop falls after publication of this report, a verbal update on the outcome of this workshop will be provided to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee at its meeting on the 15th November 2017.

1.21 **B. Proposed Vision and Ambition**

Building on the outcome of the first workshop, the following vision and priorities have been developed to capture the partnership ambition for arts and culture. These have been shared and developed with the Barnet Partnership Board and are being shared with the wider arts and culture partnership at the workshop on the 9th November.

Our Vision

Barnet is a fast growing London borough with a rich cultural heritage and history. Ambitious regeneration plans and locally led investment in housing, skills and economic development are seeing new communities develop and prosper. Our vision for the development of arts and culture as the borough grows is for

'a creative borough with a vibrant, innovative, inclusive and ambitious arts and culture offer that celebrates our heritage and will make Barnet the best place to live, visit, work and do business in'.

Our priorities

- to harness and promote arts and cultural activities to improve and enrich the lives, education, health and well-being of all residents
- to promote spaces and opportunities for creative and ambitious art projects to thrive and new cultural organisations and industries to flourish.
- to attract and develop cultural and creative talent and skills to contribute to Barnet's economic prosperity
- to celebrate our diversity and promote pride in our borough.

This report seeks agreement on the adoption of this vision and priorities in order to inform the further development of the strategy.

1.22 **C. Making use of incidental spaces**

One of the immediate 'quick wins' emerging from the engagement work so far is to make better use of incidental opportunities and 'meanwhile use' spaces that arise from time to time. Meanwhile use is a term that often refers to the temporary occupation of empty town centre retail units or other spaces that may be available ahead of longer term plans for its future use. To encourage the use of incidental or meanwhile use spaces requires a quick response and easy route to bring an area or unit into short term use. This report proposes that the council fund a fixed-term, part time resource to pilot an approach to respond and promote the meanwhile use of council assets for cultural and arts opportunities. The role of this post would be to navigate council processes to release sites quickly and safely.

Whilst the council is developing its strategic framework, a number of local and regional opportunities and issues have been developing which are outlined below.

1.23 **D. Other local and regional developments in relation to Arts and Culture**

Local developments:

- **Crowdfunding: Barnet Together/Spacehive** Barnet Together uses the Spacehive funding platform to facilitate crowdfunding for local community projects in the borough. From community gardens and street murals to festivals and sports facilities, crowdfunding allows people to pitch ideas for projects that will improve Barnet's high streets, residential neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces. Barnet Together also has a fund of £50,000 available to support crowdfunding projects in the borough. This fund has been created with the support of the London Borough of Barnet, Capita and Re (Regional Enterprise) Ltd. So far, 20 projects have registered and three projects have now reached their fundraising target.
- **New grants awarded by the council:** As well as supporting existing festivals and activities as set out in the previous report on the 21st February 2017, the council has since made a small grant to enable a new music based festival to be established in North Finchley and a

small grant to a new arts based initiative to enhance the personal development of, and the acquisition of employability skills by, young people with mental health problems and raise awareness of the importance of mental well-being to support residents with poor mental health through theatre workshops and activities.

- **Public arts:** the council has supported a sculpture installation by Drew Edwards 'Children of the Mediterranean' at Middlesex University

1.24 **Regional opportunities:**

1.25 **Greater London Authority Growth Fund:** The Good Growth Fund is the Mayor of London's new regeneration programme from 2017-18 to 2020-21, delivered through the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP). It will provide over £66 million capital funding and is open to a broad range of public, private and third-sector organisations including: London boroughs, sub-regional partnerships, town teams and business improvement districts, workspace providers, community groups, social enterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises, and charities within London that wish to drive and lead regeneration in their local area. The council made a number of applications and is also aware of a number of bids submitted by partner organisations. These include a bid submitted by Middlesex University to develop its drama facilities.

1.26 **The London Borough of Culture:** The Mayor of London has launched a new initiative to identify a London Borough of Culture from 2018. The first opportunity to bid is for 2018 and 2019 and fully developed bids are required by the 1st December this year.

Preparing to become a future London Borough of Culture will be a key ambition of our strategic framework for arts and culture with the intention to be fully ready to develop a year-long culture programme for 2021 or 2022, centred around the council's plans to regenerate large parts of the borough, most notably Brent Cross. Aligning the national recognition of a year of culture with the council's ambitious plans to create and support new communities to thrive alongside existing ones, would provide an opportunity to show case Barnet at its best.

2. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 To provide a progress report to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee on the development of an arts and culture strategy for Barnet. The report proposes a time -limited resource to be approved for the reasons set out above. This report updates the committee on the London Borough of Culture programme and proposes that Barnet aims to become a London Borough of Culture in 2021/22.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 In relation to the GLA's London Borough of Culture programme, there is an opportunity to submit a bid for 2019 and 2020 with a deadline for both years of 1st December 2017. This is not recommended as the local focus now needs to be on developing a shared partnership ambition, vision and framework that is developed and 'owned' by the wide range of organisations working and operating in the borough. Therefore the recommendation is to work to develop the local partnership to be ready to launch a bid for any future opportunity in 2021.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following the second workshop on the 9th November 2017 and the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee meeting on the 15th November 2017, the strategic framework will be finalised and presented to the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee for approval, ready for April 2018.
- 4.2 The council will arrange for the deployment of the time-limited resource to pilot an approach to respond and promote the meanwhile use of council assets for cultural and arts opportunities

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 council's 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 brought 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 future reports.
- 5.2.2 The report sets out examples of where the council and partner organisations have sought opportunities to bid for additional funding opportunities and this approach will continue.
- 5.2.3 In relation to the time-limited resource to pilot the use of meanwhile and incidental spaces, the cost of £25k will be met from within existing council budgets for 2016/17 resources (£10k) with a contribution from council reserves of (£15k).

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 As set out in Article 7 (Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships) of the Council's Constitution, the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee has responsibility for all matters relating to children, schools, education, and libraries.
- 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.
- 5.3.3 Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides a power for local authorities to do, arrange or contribute to anything which is necessary or expedient for the provision of entertainment, facilities for dancing, provision of a theatre, concert hall, dance hall or other suitable premises for use of entertainment, maintenance of a band or orchestra, development and improvement of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts and crafts which serve the arts and any matters incidental to the above. The power includes the ability to enclose or set apart any part of a park or pleasure ground under the authority's control, may permit such facilities to be used by any other person on such terms and payment as the authority sees fit and may make and permit charges for admission, subject to compliance with any covenant or condition applying to a public park or pleasure ground.
- 5.3.4 Under section 12 of the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, a local authority has a power to provide and maintain museums and art galleries. This includes a power to charge for admission, having first considered the need to secure that the museum or gallery plays a full part in the promotion of education in the area, in particular with regard to children and students. This Act also permits local authorities to contribute towards the expenses of others in providing museums or galleries.

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 arts and culture strategy will be set out in an Equalities Impact Assessment that will accompany the framework for consideration by the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

At the consultation and engagement workshop scheduled for the 9th November, any need for further engagement and consultation will be explored with participants and reported to Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee at the meeting.

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>

6.3 Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee *Promoting arts and culture in Barnet*, 21st February 2017
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s38011/Promoting%20arts%20and%20culture%20in%20Barnet.pdf>