

**Classification:** P  
**Key Decision:** NO

### Gravesham Borough Council

**Report to:** Communities and Leisure Committee  
**Date:** 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023  
**Reporting officer:** Cultural Manager  
**Subject:** Arts and Culture Update

#### **Purpose and summary of report:**

This is an information paper reflecting the work of the Arts and Culture team in 22/23 and outlining the plans and aspirations for 23/24

#### **Recommendations:**

1. That this paper is recognised as a reflection of the activity that has taken place and that the plans and action for 23/24 are approved.

<b>Key Implications:</b>	
<b>Item</b>	<b>Implications</b>
<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications in this report
<b>Finance and Value for Money</b>	The arts and culture activity and that which is planned is met through existing budgets.
<b>Corporate Plan</b>	Commitment to Place – enhancing the cultural offer
<b>Climate Change</b>	The Cultural Strategy and Action plan supports the climate change agenda through developing alternative platforms for delivery and by putting sustainability and climate criteria in the forefront of our activity both in house and supported.

#### **1. Context and Reflection**

- 1.1 The plans for 22/23 were agreed in November 2021 and have delivered on our aspirations based on our Cultural Strategy which identified the following priorities.
  - 1.1.1 Delivering a cultural and creative community
  - 1.1.2 Supporting and developing artists and creatives
  - 1.1.3 Establishing a vibrant and aspirational arts and cultural events programme

- 1.1.4 Enhancing and promoting our assets and heritage
- 1.1.5 Developing our children and young people creatively.
- 1.2 Each priority has identified activities and outcomes that reflect our aspirations over the next 5 years.
- 1.3 The complete Arts and Culture team has been in place since July 2022 and has delivered across all priority areas in our strategy as we have emerged from the pandemic.
- 1.4 In the course of 2022 our community engagement through performances, workshops and exhibitions has brought in strong audiences for workshops averaging max capacity of 10 for 42 workshops in the year to date. In addition we delivered 33 workshops over the course of December as part of the Christmas programme 'Do We Know Their Christmas'.
- 1.5 In addition to the programme delivery we have secured regular hires in St George's Arts Centre, including Reeves Café in Unit 20 and regular bookings from KAB and Involve Kent.
- 1.6 Highlights of the delivery for 22/23 are identified below:-
  - 1.6.1 Delivering a cultural and creative community
    - 1.6.1.1 We have established strong links with Economic Development and Regeneration resulting in very positive work with external bodies to support creative workspace in Gravesham
    - 1.6.1.2 Opening of St George's Arts Centre with a full programme of events from community hires to national touring exhibitions. The Centre has attracted over 12000 visitors in its first year of opening.
    - 1.6.1.3 Full programme of workshops at St George's Arts Centre, not exclusively in house activity for example the KAB are running 3 sessions a month and Involve Kent are running weekly arts sessions. In addition artists are regularly hiring the space to run their own workshops.
    - 1.6.1.4 Supporting the Ship and Shore programme with LV21 ensuring greater creative use of St Andrew's Arts Centre for performance based activity.
    - 1.6.1.5 Partnering with other creatives to bring high quality work to the borough – eg Matthew Bourne's New Adventures visiting over 12 spaces to perform to isolated audiences in all parts of the borough.
  - 1.6.2 Supporting and Developing Artists and Creatives
    - 1.6.2.1 Matched funding of projects at £16300 has resulted in funding coming into the borough of £143402 for a variety of projects, including music tuition for pre school age children, multiple artist residencies in St Andrew's Arts Centre as part of the above mentioned Ship and Shore project, and a new immersive piece of theatre that will be performed in multiple spaces in 2023.

- 1.6.2.2 Establishing an Artist Residency in St George's Arts Centre, which is bringing income and added value through workshops and greater network potential
- 1.6.2.3 Enhancing support of local networks to develop confidence for applying for funding from other sources.
- 1.6.2.4 Supporting the Gravesham Arts Salon network of creative practitioners in the delivery of projects in conjunction with the Council
- 1.6.3 Establishing a vibrant and aspirational arts and cultural events programme.
  - 1.6.3.1 Support for Gravesham Fringe Festival which brought over 5000 visitors into our venues for over 40 events for 10 days in June 2022.
  - 1.6.3.2 Focus on diversity and reinforcing links with both local partners and forging links with partners for future projects. Working with Lyrici to produce a new piece of theatre and GTown to support their aspiration to develop their new writing for festivals.
  - 1.6.3.3 Strong workshop programme at St George's Arts Centre, working with artist in residence as well as local practitioners to ensure that there is at least one adult and one young person's workshop every month.
- 1.6.4 Enhancing and Promoting our assets and heritage.
  - 1.6.4.1 Developing an in house show celebrating the 150 anniversary of St Andrew's Arts Centre.
  - 1.6.4.2 Building exhibitions and activities around our assets. The Jubilee exhibition created entirely in house from our own collection; and outdoor theatre and comedy performances in the Fort Gardens.
- 1.6.5 Developing our Young People Creatively.
  - 1.6.5.1 Active involvement in the creation of the Local Cultural Education Partnership and position on the steering group. This ambitious project is funded by Arts Council England and facilitated by Royal Opera House Bridge.
  - 1.6.5.2 Building learning opportunities into all our grant funding, both Make It Grants and matched funding.
  - 1.6.5.3 Active support of Creative Schools Network.

## **2. Plans for 23/24**

- 2.1 The next year is a challenging one for the council and our community, the budget gap and the cost of living crisis is affecting all expenditure considerations. The Arts and Culture team aim to ensure that we can deliver on the priorities identified in the strategy in the most efficient way for both council and community.
  - 2.1.1 We will be focussing on our partnership work with other agencies to develop creative work hubs and making spaces. This aspect of our activity

will encourage relocation, and the regeneration that supports, as well as greater scope for cultural activity for our residents.

- 2.1.2 With budget pressures in mind we have successfully gained commitment from hirers of St George's Arts Centre to rehire or continue their work in the centre including KAB, Involve and Reeves café. We are also actively promoting all our centres for hire, not only St George's and St Andrew's Arts centres but also The Blake Gallery in the Woodville.
- 2.2 There is an action plan as an appendix to this report, however, the main areas of activity are outlined here,
- 2.3 Delivering a cultural and creative community.
  - 2.3.1 Exploring other creative making spaces through work with partners. This is in addition to maximising the use of our existing spaces including St George's Arts Centre, St Andrew's Arts Centre and the Woodville.
  - 2.3.2 Ensure that we have a strong strategic based agenda of activity across all our centres and are using them to maximum efficiency.
  - 2.3.3 Identify ways that Arts and Culture can underpin the social prescribing agenda.
  - 2.3.4 Enter discussions with Artist in Residence to put a three year scheme in place with tangible outcomes.
  - 2.3.5 Explore the possibilities of a volunteer cohort across the whole department, building on the existing group at The Woodville.
  - 2.3.6 Ensure that all national partners are fully aware of our aspirations for the future and engage with them to secure future funding opportunities.
- 2.4 Supporting and Developing Artists and Creatives.
  - 2.4.1 Actively increase match funding bids that chime with our strategy criteria; support artists to access ACE funding, and match funding those that are successful with the aim to make artists work sustainable.
    - 2.4.1.1 Emphasis will enable us to focus on enabling artists to deliver our priorities and ensuring that the budgets can be maximised.
  - 2.4.2 Support and organise funding surgeries for artists in the borough.
  - 2.4.3 Develop work stream with Tilbury to encourage cross river activity within the next 3 years starting with the Light Festival in 2023.
  - 2.4.4 Supporting developments to maximise creative spaces, resources and opportunities.
  - 2.4.5 Work with partners, eg Local Cultural Education Partnership, to ensure that Gravesham Artists are represented within the cultural directory.
  - 2.4.6 Support the development Gravesham Grapevine (through the GAS network) to become the cultural diary website for the Borough.
- 2.5 Establishing a vibrant and aspirational arts and cultural events programme.

- 2.5.1 Three year application for Gravesham Fringe Festival and the Light Festival to establish annual festivals in the borough that can be sustainable.
- 2.5.2 Work with music artists and venues to broaden the scope of this activity within the borough.
- 2.5.3 Positively engage with more diverse groups to enhance and sustain their arts and culture work within the borough.
- 2.5.4 Develop a digital programme to improve access and broaden the scope of activity.
- 2.6 Enhancing and promoting our assets and heritage.
  - 2.6.1 Curation of exhibitions around specific artefacts in appropriate locations.
  - 2.6.2 Finalise the Discover Gravesham Website.
  - 2.6.3 Apply for funding to create a meaningful catalogue of artefacts and items.
  - 2.6.4 Create a digital presence based on the artefact and collections catalogue.
  - 2.6.5 Engage with local and national heritage groups and develop a programme across the heritage portfolio.
- 2.7 Developing our children and young people creatively.
  - 2.7.1 Develop specific funding for young people up to the age of 25 through Shared Prosperity funding.
  - 2.7.2 Work with partners to develop and deliver the Local Cultural Education Partnership.
  - 2.7.3 Embed learning opportunities into funding and matched funding criteria.

### 3. Appendices

- 3.1 Arts and Culture Action Plan

### 4. Background Documents

- 4.1 A Creative Gravesham Arts and Culture Strategy

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Secondary Implications	
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	GBC has committed to the Cultural Strategy and this report reflects that strategy and the priorities identified. There is a risk that the aspirations identified in the strategy would not be met were this action plan not ratified.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	<i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i>

	<p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of <a href="#">personal data</a> or <a href="#">special category data</a> or <a href="#">criminal offence data</a>? A definition of each type of data can be found on the Information Commissioner's Office website via the above links. no</p>
	<p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice? Click here to start typing</p>
	<p>c. If no to question b, please seek advice from your nominated DPIA assessor or the Information Governance Team at <a href="mailto:gdpr@medway.gov.uk">gdpr@medway.gov.uk</a>. Click here to start typing</p>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer. no</p>
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer. yes - enhanced partnership working built into the report</p>
	<p><i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i></p>
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	<p>The activity and performance programmes encourage engagement from the community and can reduce antisocial behaviours</p>
<b>Digital and website implications</b>	<p>There are no specific digital and website implications, however consideration should be given to greater support for culture within the councils digital output including on the website</p>
<b>Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</b>	<p>There are no specific implications.</p>