

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Executive</b> 18 July 2011</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Report from Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services</b></p>
Wards affected: All	
<p><b>Arts Development Strategy</b></p>	

## 1.0 Summary

1.1 This report outlines:

- the Arts Development Strategy (Appendix 1) for the council which has been developed following the recent consultation.
- proposals for the council's delivery of an Arts Development Programme for the borough within the current financial constraints. This report takes into consideration feedback from the council's recent consultation on the council's Arts and Festivals offer as well as feedback and monitoring gathered over a number of years

## 2.0 Recommendations

That Executive:

- 2.1 approve the Arts Development Strategy (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 approve the proposals at 7.0. This will deliver an arts programme against the four key priorities and reduce the grant to the Tricycle Theatre by £20k per annum.
- 2.3. endorse the council's commitment to the future development of arts and cultural activities in the borough at the new Civic Centre and a new cultural hub in Willesden, conditional on the proposed redevelopment progressing.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 The Council recognises the important role arts development plays in strengthening community cohesion, enhancing health and wellbeing, creating employment and improving life chances for residents. At a time when central government funding for the arts is being drastically cut, reflecting the wider pressures on public spending, the Council needs to ensure that it has a clear direction for its arts provision. Brent needs to take the lead in developing its local talent, raising the game in terms of excellence and ensuring that all residents have access to top quality arts and cultural experiences.
- 3.2 There is a clear commitment to the development of an improved arts and culture offer in Brent and a strategic context for change outlined in the council's Corporate Borough Plan, Brent – Our Future 2010-2014 and Brent's Cultural Strategy 2010-2015. Brent is a key partner within the Brent Culture, Sports and Learning Forum which developed Brent's Cultural Strategy adopted by the council in 2010. The Cultural Strategy acknowledges the importance of culture in Brent as 'an essential ingredient of a thriving and confident borough' and aims to create a vibrant and accessible cultural scene in the borough.
- 3.3 The opportunities created by the development of the Civic Centre and the potential development of Willesden Green Library Centre are unprecedented in recent years. Subject to Executive approval of the Willesden scheme, two newly built, state of the art facilities with surrounding public spaces would create capacity for showcasing local, national and international art and performance in the borough. Existing partnerships with cultural assets, such as the Tricycle Theatre, Lexi Cinema, Wembley Stadium and Fountain Studios can be developed to maximise cultural opportunities. Other council buildings such as sport centres and libraries can also be utilised in a coordinated improved cultural offer. Through developing the Council's relationship with the Culture Sports and Learning Forum, links with local businesses and commercial culture providers can be strengthened.
- 3.4 A programme of community engagement linked to the Games is already in place to maximise the opportunities created by the borough's hosting of five major sports and to ensure a tangible legacy for residents.
- 3.5 A clear strategy for arts development in Brent is overdue and required. There are a number of increasingly urgent reasons for clarity and direction, namely:
- 3.5.1 Public sector cuts and the need for the council to make savings.
- 3.5.2 Restructuring and refocusing of the arts team to reflect agreed strategic priorities and to support Brent's cultural offer outlined in Brent's Cultural Strategy.
- 3.5.3 The requirement to be transparent in prioritising arts development activity within the council, whilst recognising limited resources.
- 3.5.4 The need for clarity regarding what Brent Council's arts service provides and what should be led by other groups.

- 3.5.5 The opening of the new Civic Centre in 2013 with the potential to provide significant new cultural opportunities for community and voluntary groups.
- 3.5.6 Plans to redevelop Willesden Green Library Centre and create a cultural hub/council service centre, conditional on the proposed redevelopment progressing.
- 3.5.7 The need to develop the existing partnership working with the Tricycle Theatre so that Brent residents get the maximum benefit from the grant funding.

## 4. Priorities

4.1 The priorities proposed for Arts Development are:

- **Supporting the regeneration and infrastructure investments underway**  
Over the next three years, the Council will be focusing its resources on two major developments: the new Civic Centre in Wembley and, potentially, the redeveloped Willesden Green Library Centre in the south of the borough. Two brand new libraries, a new museum, arts development work in South Kilburn and Harlesden and exciting new public spaces would create opportunities to foster creativity and community participation. Additionally the council will build on the partnership with the Tricycle Theatre, developing the existing service level agreement to ensure the Brent residents benefit from this valuable cultural resource in the borough.  
The council will use the arts to encourage participation and responsibility for the borough's cultural assets and public spaces.
- **Promoting the cultural economy**  
The creative economy in Brent is complex and diverse, ranging from national facilities such as Wembley Stadium, Wembley Arena and major television studios to a wide range of individual artists and performers. Promoting the creative economy creates social and economic opportunities for Brent residents and the team will focus on improving cultural leadership in the borough, particularly through the work of the Culture, Sports and Learning Forum. Locally based practitioners can be supported into careers and businesses related to their art forms and the council can showcase existing areas of cultural economic activity in the borough, such as textiles, music, carnival arts and writing.
- **Commissioning and promoting art**  
The team will create a structured programme of commissioning artists to both create art and animate public spaces with performance. The Council is already a significant patron of the arts due to the extensive regeneration of the borough in recent years. The team will continue that work, enhancing the environment for residents and visitors and promoting Brent as a vibrant cultural centre. Art in Brent's schools will be recognised and promoted. The council will be looking to encourage and promote the best of Brent talent in the arts as well as bringing prestigious artists into the borough.
- **Promoting arts and festivals linked to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.**

The cultural elements of the Games will dominate the work of the team in the first eighteen months of the strategy, promoting arts events that reflect the borough's love of sport and its connections to communities across the world. A programme of community engagement linked to the Games is already in place to maximise the opportunities created by the borough's hosting of five major sports and to ensure a tangible legacy for residents.

## **5. Arts Development Strategy**

5.1 The attached Arts Development strategy for the council (Appendix 1) has been written to align with the principles of Brent's Cultural Strategy 2010-2015. It has been produced to ensure arts activities and opportunities are planned and developed in an agreed and coordinated way within Brent.

5.2 The strategy recognises the vital role the council and its partners can play in providing cultural leadership, both by encouraging local artists and creative industries and by bringing high quality artists and performers into Brent. It also highlights the contribution that arts and cultural activities play in terms of improving health, creating safe places, improving life chances and increasing community cohesion.

5.3 The Council also acknowledges the significant presence of the film and television industry in Park Royal and Wembley and aims to work with this sector, both through the Culture Sports and Learning Forum and through the arts team building partnerships on specific projects.

### **5.4 2012 Olympics**

While the Arts Development strategy covers the next four years it recognises the significance of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The strategy identifies that the 2012 Games will be the dominant cultural event for the whole of London in the next 18 months. With Brent hosting events in two Olympic venues – football at Wembley Stadium, badminton and rhythmic gymnastics at Wembley Arena – the delivery model for arts and festivals during this period is likely to be heavily influenced by the Games.

### **5.5 The Tricycle Theatre**

The Tricycle produces a programme of culturally diverse theatre, cinema and visual arts in north-west London. The theatre is also an important producer of national and international work, and operates a Creative Space for educational workshops and social inclusion programmes for children and young people aged from 18 months to 26 years. Brent council's grant of £218,000 is managed by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) and funds outreach activity with young people. The theatre also receives grants from the Arts Council (ACE) and, until recently, received £56,000 from London Councils. Following the government's reduction in funding for ACE they have reduced their grant to the Tricycle by 11 per cent. Therefore, the public grant funding of the Tricycle has been reduced by over £100,000 this year.

5.6 As a result of the funding from Brent and the conditions of the SLA, in 2010/11 the Tricycle provided in the borough

137 artist in residence sessions for school groups  
116 artist in residence session for young people aged 11 to 17 who are newly arrived to the UK with refugee, asylum seeker or migrant status

612 sessions for socially excluded 15-26 year olds  
66 confidence building sessions for young people

In total, in 2010/11 the Tricycle's Education & Social Inclusion Programme provided over 46,000 experiences for children & young people of whom at least 90% were from Brent

- 5.7 The Tricycle is a significant employer in the borough. They currently have 16 full time employees & 52 part time. In addition they have at any one time approx 20 short term (up to three months generally) employees on the books. They have a policy of prioritising Brent residents for non-specialist jobs ie Front of House staff – currently 47% of FOH staff are from Brent.
- 5.8 Brent residents are given discounts to selected screenings/theatrical productions Over 50% of the Tricycle's audience is from Brent. The Council wants to improve the cultural opportunities for Brent residents and supporting a nationally recognised cultural asset in the borough is an excellent way of doing so.
- 5.9 The Tricycle is an active member of the Brent Culture Sport & Learning Forum, working to promote and develop cultural activity in the borough.
- 5.10 The Tricycle Theatre is a significant cultural asset for the borough. The relationship with the Tricycle needs to be developed so that the council's priorities continue to be reflected in the grant funded activities and so that local people recognise it as a Brent asset
- 5.11 **New Civic Centre and potential Cultural Hub in Willesden**  
The Arts Development Strategy also acknowledges the impact of the new Civic Centre from the summer of 2013. The position of the Civic Centre, opposite Arena Square, provides opportunities to host a range of arts and cultural events. The building will have significant quality public areas within which to hold events including halls, a garden, foyer and gallery areas. The council is keen to maximise the use of the building for community and income generation purposes and will develop a Calendar of Events to ensure this is achieved. The Calendar will include a wide range of activities to reflect the diversity of the borough, promote arts and culture and celebrate key Brent community events. In addition the council is proposing to potentially develop a new cultural hub in Willesden. If the Executive approve the scheme in due course, the new centre would contain display and performance space alongside the new digitally enabled library, museum, archive and council service centre. This would be a significant opportunity to showcase local talent and creativity.
- 5.12 Although there have been some significant successes and partnerships built, Brent is not fully exploiting the potential for arts and, more broadly, cultural activity which will deliver real returns in social, learning and economic benefits for the borough.
- 5.13 The developments around infrastructure bring exciting opportunities for creating excellent, inclusive cultural facilities in Brent's new Civic Centre and potentially at the refurbished Willesden Green Library Centre. These developments necessitate a clear focus for the arts team.
- 5.14 The current financial climate and the Council's savings targets necessitate budget reductions in all service areas. The core arts budget, after staffing, is modest and in

the region of £50,000. The strategy proposes an ambitious programme over the next four years and any reduction in the arts budget would jeopardise delivery. The proposal is therefore to reduce the Tricycle grant of £218,000 by £20,000.

5.14 The aims and vision of the strategy will support the proposals at 7.0 An action plan would need to be developed to ensure delivery.

## **6.0 Consultation**

6.1 The Arts Development Strategy has been developed in consultation with internal and external partners and stakeholders over a sustained period of time. It builds on the extensive participation that developed the Culture Sport and Learning Forum's Cultural Strategy during 2010.

6.2 The most recent public consultation (on arts and festivals in the borough) took place from 7 March to 26 April 2011. The consultation included an online consultation document, a paper consultation and presentations at Brent's Multi-faith Forum and Brent's Culture, Sports and Learning Forum. There were 202 responses to the online and paper consultation plus nine emails, one letter and feedback from the Environmental Projects and Policy Team.

6.3 The consultation document sets out the council's proposed four priority areas for arts development and asked: if they were the right priorities; were they of equal importance; and to rate them in preference of importance. It also asked if there were other areas of work not covered in the identified priorities and there was a final open question asking if there was anything additional to add.

6.4 The response percentages to the questions in relation to arts were:

- Are they the right priorities?
  - Arts – 54% agreed, 46% disagreed
- Are they equally important?
  - Arts – 71% disagreed, 29% agreed (see below for preferred priorities)

6.5 The consultation provided an opportunity for feedback on current provision and future provision of Arts. Respondents identified the two preferred priorities as promoting the cultural economy and supporting the regeneration and infrastructure investments underway. Open comments show a preference for supporting the cultural and creative work that taps into Brent's diverse communities and also the importance of arts work in supporting regeneration in the borough.

6.6 The results of the consultation helped to inform the options proposed for Executive to consider.

6.7 Other relevant consultations and feedback have taken place over the past few years which have also informed the strategy. They include a mapping exercise of current cultural facilities took place in 2009 and consultation on the Cultural Strategy, which took place in 2010.

## 7.0 Proposals

7.1 The proposals have been developed with consideration to the need to make savings on the current levels of spend, the results of all consultation over a sustained period of time, and to meet the needs of Brent's diverse communities

7.2 The aims and vision of the strategy will support the **proposals**, which are as follows:

7.2.1 The development of an strategy action plan to ensure delivery.

7.2.3 Adoption of the four priorities for the 2012 and Arts Development Team:

- *Supporting the regeneration and infrastructure investments underway*
- *Promoting the cultural and creative economy*
- *Commissioning and promoting art*
- *The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games*

7.2.4 Reduction in the grant to the Tricycle Theatre of £20,000 This reduction is necessary in the current financial climate and with the council's need to make savings but also acknowledges the importance of this partnership and its potential to enhance the cultural offer for Brent residents. The Council will ensure that the Service Level Agreement with the Tricycle will clearly reflect its equalities commitments. This would bring savings to the Council of £20,000.

## 8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 The recommendation results in a £20,000 savings, which is a reduction in grant to the Tricycle Theatre. This figure is already assumed in 2011/2012 budget so if not made here would have to be found elsewhere within the arts budget.

## 9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 While there is no duty on the council to provide arts activities, the Local Authority has a power to provide (or arrange for the provision of) entertainment, the development and improvement of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts, and otherwise attract visitors to the area for recreation etc under S144 and 145 of the Local Government Act 1972.

## 10.0 Diversity/Equality Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and is will follow. Its current status is that it is being audited by the council's Diversity team. The

EIA has looked at the importance of the arts development service and considered its impact on the eight protected groups against the core objectives of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

- 10.2 Section 149 in Chapter 1 of Part XI of the Equality Act 2010 is the new public sector equality duty which came into force on 5 April 2011. Broadly speaking Section 149 extends the scope of the duty to all 'protected characteristics' as defined in section 4 of the Act except marriage and civic partnership.
- 10.3 The protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex; and sexual orientation.
- 10.4 The EIA considers:
- cohesion and inclusion particularly around ethnicity and age to ensure that the proposed programme of work operates appropriately
  - Promoting opportunities for residents to participate as creative practitioners and audiences, for example through ensuring council supported venues are accessible and welcoming
  - Encouraging ambition and excellence as a key route to inclusion – looking to bring in excellent work, showcase, and encourage others to see it too.
- 10.5 There were no specific issues raised during the consultation on equalities relating to arts development

## **11.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

- 11.1 A restructuring of the Arts Team has recently been carried out in accordance with the council's Managing Change policy. Staff and trade unions were fully consulted.

Sue McKenzie  
Head of Libraries, Arts and Heritage

Sue Harper  
Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods