

**COMMONWEALTH GAMES, CULTURE & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2019
REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, SKILLS AND CULTURE
COUNCILLOR JAYNE FRANCIS**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report sets out my portfolio priorities that relate to the Commonwealth Games, Culture and Physical Activity Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. ACCOUNTABILITY

Arts and Culture and Tourism	Sustaining and promoting art, culture and tourism, including management of grants and associated economic opportunities.
The Library of Birmingham and Community Libraries	Oversight of the regional and city-wide role of the Library of Birmingham and the community library service; including the vital part libraries play in communities, learning and skills.
Museums	Oversight of the provision and activity of the Birmingham Museums Trust.

3. PRIORITIES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Arts and Culture;

- Resolve financial arrangements from 2020/21 for revenue funded organisations (including Capital Endowment fund) and refresh some of the project funding commissioning schemes
- Establish the new Cultural Compact for the city, including recruitment of a Chair
- Review and consider findings / recommendations of the feasibility project of the city's Film Birmingham function to expand its services across the region.
- To progress the engagement and delivery of Arts & Culture in Health & Wellbeing activities across the city
- To review the role of cultural officer engagement with Planning & Regeneration and, address the refresh of the current Public Art Strategy as part of that review.

Museums & Heritage

- Resolve and implement the planned maintenance requirements for the councils museums building stock
- Resolve lease arrangements with Birmingham Museums Trust for Sarehole Mill and Thinktank Museums
- Assist Birmingham Museums Trust with their wider capital aspirations
- Refresh and renew Birmingham's Heritage Strategy
- Provide support for Birmingham's annual Heritage Week

4. Support to the Arts (Funding)

The 2019/20 budget was reduced by 23% (down to £2.677m pa) but has been 'ring-fenced' until 2022/23 to give organisations some (financial) stability over next three years as well as capacity to help contribute towards the CWG's 2022 cultural programme.

The Council has established a £2m Capital Fund to also help support the 'major' arts organisations with (revenue) Endowments from 2020 but has yet to be implemented as the 'terms of engagement' have yet to be determined by Finance. As a result the funding arrangements for Midlands Arts Centre (mac) remain in abeyance

Arts projects funding - provides some £250,000 pa support for smaller independent arts organisations to deliver targeted work in the community across the city for; young people, adults in hard to reach communities and funding for Diversity projects. The first rounds of the 2019-20 project commissions have been awarded.

In regards to capital projects, the council agreed to a Prudential Borrowing loan to Performances Birmingham Ltd back in July for its capital project to rebuild and refurbish Front of House facilities at the Symphony Hall (ICC). However, the Capital Programme Board recently rejected a request from Birmingham Rep for a £300,000 grant to support their Front of House capital refurbishment programme.

5. Major Events - Signature (arts) Festivals.

Major Events funding included support for the delivery of the biennial Birmingham Weekender Festival in October 2019 (presented in Digbeth for the first time). This event was coordinated by Culture Central with a range of partners.

The Major Events Fund is also supporting the delivery of the Birmingham International Dance Festival in June 2020. This biennial festival is coordinated by DanceXchange the regional dance agency based in Birmingham. Other major funders include Arts Council England and The Dance Hub.

6. Culture Compact - Core Cities Cultural Enquiry

Birmingham was successful in its application to Arts Council England and awarded £30,000 in July to help establish a Cultural Compact. The Compact is designed to support the cultural sector going forward working with key partners across the city e.g. Arts Council, Culture Central, the wider cultural sector, Businesses, Universities, Health Sector and other key stakeholders. The intention is to develop a Business Plan for the city that delivers; a refreshed cultural strategy for the city from 2020/21; aligns resources to support investment in Culture going forward and consider future cultural infrastructure requirements.

Several meetings have been held with Stakeholders across the city including the wider cultural sector. A draft Terms of Reference has been established and also a Job Description for the chairs role (recruitment for this post is underway). It is intended that the Birmingham Compact will be up and running with an agreed work programme in the new Calendar year

In the meantime, Birmingham will be hosting a meeting convened by ACE on the 19th November where other 'Compact' cities will be meeting to share learning and good practice

7. Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) - operational matters

The Council's Capital Programme Board is currently considering officers proposals for repairs and maintenance funding for the upkeep of our heritage building stock going forward. If successful, this funding will commission Full Condition Surveys for each of the sites to help identify immediate needs and plan for future repairs and maintenance matters

BMT have recently appointed a new Chair and I look forward to working closely with them going forward

Arrangements for a new lease for BMT at Sarehole Mill are underway but the Council is still waiting for a response from Millennium Point Trust regarding a proposal for BCC to take on the lease from them for Millennium Point and sub-let to BMT as part of the new Contract and Lease terms.

8. Birmingham Museums Trust (BMT) - Capital programme ambitions

BMT are continuing to progress their ambition to develop a new Museums HQ and Collections Centre in the city - a potential site has been identified at Meadway which is subject to the land being available.

Other critical success factors for BMT in this venture include securing major capital funding for what could be up to a £16m capital project and, identifying key partners to accompany them as co-tenants in the venture. BMT themselves have been instrumental in helping establish a new Cultural Development Trust for the city to help fundraise for any Capital project. Initial Trustees include Sir Albert Bore and Liam Byrne MP.

A recent meeting with funding agencies Arts Council England (ACE) and the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF) made it clear that a Full Business Case (verified by an independent appraisal) will be required to secure any funding. BCC's own procedures will also require for a Full Business Case to be developed. In the meantime, BMT have been encouraged by NHLF to apply for some resilience funding to help bolster their capacity in delivering this capital feasibility proposal.

Officers from across various service areas continue to work with BMT to scope out the content and timescale for such a proposal and will be providing further information to the next Capital programme Board in early December.

9. Heritage Strategy Refresh

Officers are working with the Council's Heritage Champion, Councillor Phil Davis on organising the refresh of the current Heritage Strategy (due for renewal in 2020).

A draft brief has been agreed for the commissioning of a Heritage practitioner to lead on the coordination and delivery of the strategy. This will include working closely with BMT and the city's heritage sector as well as wider consultation with stakeholders and the public.

In the meantime, officers have proposed that the Council continues to support the successful Heritage Week in Birmingham with a small budget on an annual basis from existing resources to keep this successful event alive - which I am considering.

10. Commonwealth Games 2022 Cultural Programme

The Creative Programme Director (Martin Green) has been busy making further appointments to his team at the Organising Committee including a Head of Ceremonies and Head of Cultural Programming.

Martin hosted a meeting in September at the Birmingham REP attended by some 350 representatives from the wider cultural sector across the region where it was explained that cultural programme project proposals would be considered once the 'curatorial guidelines' were issued in January 2020.

The Cultural Development Service is working closely with Martin and his team on the coordination and facilitation of the cultural programme at a local level including coordination with Local Arts Fora and Community Arts organisations. I will report back at the OSC meeting on a meeting due to be held with senior officers at ACE on 31st October regarding the CWG's culture programme.

In the meantime, officers continue to engage with colleagues internally on the coordination of the cultural programme alongside the wider Community Engagement and Legacy ambitions for the city.

11. Film Birmingham

The Film Birmingham unit sits within the Cultural Development Service and includes the promotion of Birmingham as a filming location, location finding, crew recruitment and administration of film permits etcetera.

The GBSLEP has recently funded feasibility work to review the potential of this function expanding to other local authorities across the wider West Midlands region. Early consultation indicates that this service would be welcomed however, full findings won't be known until mid-2020 when a report will be submitted to CMT for consideration.

12. Arts in Health & Wellbeing work

Officers in Cultural Development have been working with Adult Social Care (ASCH) to help deliver Prevention work for those in need across the city.

The work supports the visibility and embedding of arts and culture within adult social care and health, particularly focused around Direct Payments, adult social care commissioning activity and cycle, plus training, development and culture change. This involves connecting arts organisations to emerging ASCH commissioning intentions and opportunities, creating more contact and collaboration between the arts sector and social care and health sectors plus creating opportunities to bring arts organisations together with care and support providers in the voluntary sector. The work aligns with some of the emerging best practice nationally; the ASCH day opportunities consultation, as well as opportunities through Community Catalysts to create more interesting offers for citizens, that can still meet their care and support needs.

So far, £383k has been grant awarded to arts organisations over 2 years through the 'Prevention and Communities Programme'. The primary focus of the "Prevention & Communities" programme is on prevention and early intervention, creating the opportunities and environment which can prevent or delay the need for citizens' dependence on statutory social care and health services. This also includes providing alternative opportunities and options for citizens already in receipt of those services to help maximise health, happiness and independence.

The Cultural Development Service, ASCH and Birmingham Centre for Arts Therapies (BCAT) organised an 'Arts and Culture for Health, Happiness, Independence and Wellbeing in Birmingham' conference at Fazeley Studios on 26th September 2019. Attended by over 100 delegates from both arts and health sectors, the conference was the third event in a series, which started in 2018 to bring people together across sectors. The event was aimed at a range of stakeholders interested in how arts, culture and personalised therapy programmes can promote the health, happiness, wellbeing and independence of citizens in Birmingham, identifying and promoting the how, where, when and who of working together, with the aim still of enabling citizens to live healthy, happy, independent lives in their own homes and communities, particularly those already known or at risk of becoming known to the social care and health sectors.

More recently, The Cultural Development Service has been approached by Public Health to advise on and engage with the commissioning of a 12 month rolling festival of quality community arts and cultural events that will engage and prompt Birmingham citizens to have conversations about their relationship with food, the role it plays in their lives and reflect on the role of food in the wider context of the City e.g. its environmental impact, impact on health.

13. Public Realm / Public Art

Over the last twelve to eighteen months, a cultural development officer has been 'embedded' one day a week within the Design Team in Planning & Regeneration to help inform and educate each sides understanding of the challenges and opportunities presented around new developments - particularly those concerning the public realm and public art.

It is evident that the potential for the work involved far exceeds the current capacity of both service areas however, useful gains have been made in a number of key areas including; facilitating a 'Public Art plan for the new CWG's Athletes Village, Incorporating arts and culture into Langleigh and Peddimore SPD's, securing £10k arts commission for public realm improvements for Hay Mills from s.106 and, supporting IM Properties to recruit an arts consultant and develop their public art plan.

In addition to this 'strategic planning' work, officers continue to coordinate regular meetings of the Public Art Officers Group (PAG) to not only manage the movement and upkeep of the city's current public art stock but also, to monitor and facilitate proposals for new public art initiatives across the city. Recent successes include the installation of the 'Knife Angel' sculpture in the city centre. Other current projects under consideration include proposals for a new 'International Mother Language Monument' in Small Heath Park and a potential relocation of the Spirit of Enterprise water feature.

14. CONCLUSION / CLOSING REMARKS

It is evident that, in spite of Culture not being a statutory requirement for Local Authorities, the city council cannot ignore the many challenges (and opportunities) presented by the Cultural Agenda. We are obliged for example to maintain our museums and heritage buildings that house and protect the city's valuable collection. But we should also look to the future and help identify and establish whatever governance models and financial instruments are necessary to safeguard and develop our Culture Sector going forward, which is why the implementation of a 'Cultural Compact' for Birmingham will be a key priority for me over the next twelve months. This initiative will in turn, help the city determine its refreshed Heritage and Cultural Strategies.

It is also important that as well as supporting our funded cultural organisations to build up resilience and sustainability in this time of austerity, we continue to support the independent cultural sector who deliver so much more for the wider community than just their artistic output - especially as we look towards the city hosting the Commonwealth Games in less than three years' time.

Finally, I have been encouraged by the inroads being made by Cultural Development officers with our Planning and Regeneration and Public Health Services and look forward to seeing these inter-service work programmes develop further over the next twelve months.

Councillor Jayne Francis
Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture

October 2019