

Executive Member for Leisure, Culture, and Social Inclusion

9 March 2010

Report of the Assistant Director (Lifelong Learning and Culture)

Inclusive Arts

Summary

1. This report summarises the work to date of the Community Arts Team within Learning Culture and Children's Services and asks the Executive Member to agree a revised remit for a new "Inclusive Arts Service".

Background

2. In 2003, following a successful pilot of community arts work in the York East area, the Community Arts team was set up to provide a city-wide service to tackle social disadvantage and access to the arts within some of York's 'harder to reach' communities. The focus for their work was formed through discussion with our funding partners, principally the Arts Council England: Yorkshire, and with the target groups identified by the Social Inclusion Panel.
3. The Arts Council England: Yorkshire has been our major funding partner for the six years that the team has been operating and recently also funded the team for a one year project to develop cultural programmes within the eight Children's Centres in the city. The current funding ceases in March 2010 and we cannot apply for continued funding; however, we are able to submit a G4A (grants for all) application for new and additional activity.
4. The outline work programme for the next year is set out in Annex 1. This set out the wide range of the work supported or facilitated by the Community Arts team and highlights the strong contribution they make to ensuring that our city wide events and festivals programme is supported by, and involves contributions from, our local communities. Those programmes that have attracted in additional funding for the year from external partners, whether cash or in kind, are indicated with a star. Over the six years, more than £500k has been secured from external sources to support the goal of increasing arts participation within those communities that traditionally show a low level of engagement in culture.
5. A review of the aims and objectives of the Community Arts team by the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture, and Social Inclusion was recommended during the Council's budget setting process for 2010/11.

Consultation

6. The budget setting process allowed for a wide consultation with members, partners and members of the public on the usefulness of the current community arts provision. Staff have also had their opportunity to put forward suggestions for refocusing the work of the team. These views are reflected in this proposal.

Options

7. The principal options are:
 - to maintain the status quo
 - to create a new “Inclusive Arts” service with a focus on social inclusion and community cohesion

Analysis

8. Although it would be possible to maintain the status quo there is a significant opportunity at this time, as external funding falls out, to put a clear focus on prioritising social inclusion and community cohesion in line with York’s Inclusive City aims. The following objectives are therefore proposed for the service.
9. The Inclusive Arts service will support and develop arts projects to:
 - Ensure that as many residents as possible can share in the city’s cultural, economic, environmental and social well being, especially those living in deprived neighbourhoods or who are in other ways disadvantaged
 - Focus on improving quality of life for those communities identified as living in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England
 - Do more to make York a more welcoming and inclusive city for both residents and visitors
 - Increase participation in the arts and in their local communities amongst the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and groups by:
 - Encouraging and nurturing the creative potential and energy of children and young people
 - Promoting inter-generational understanding
 - Valuing and making the most of the experience and knowledge of older people
 - Promoting and supporting good citizenship through volunteering
 - Developing the role and capacity of the third sector within the city through new approaches to partnership working and commissioning
 - Foster greater understanding and positive contact between different cultures and communities
 - Respond positively to the changing black and minority ethnic (BME) population in the city

10. We propose to develop a new organisational structure to ensure long-term financial sustainability and productivity. A 3-year strategic plan will be produced working with community and arts groups to:
- Create a more distinct entity for the service with the Council as the main stakeholder but with the involvement of community stakeholders in steering and governance of the projects
 - Plan the main projects and outcomes for the service
 - Increase the profile of the service working with our colleagues across the council and through marketing and community consultation
 - Create a reporting line to the Social Inclusion Working Group
 - Identify and secure sources of project funding that support our community aspirations
 - Increase the contribution of project funding to the core costs of the team
11. Services would include:
- Direct project delivery
 - Consultancy
 - Project management
 - Evaluation
 - Consultation
 - Training
 - Capacity development
 - Volunteering
 - Signposting and advice programmes
12. The Inclusive Arts service will contribute to a range of LAA targets including:
- % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area
 - % of people who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality
 - Participation in regular volunteering
 - Environment for a thriving third sector
 - Young people's participation in positive activities
 - Engagement in the arts
13. It is recommended that the revised focus for an Inclusive Arts Service is adopted in order to create stronger links to community organisations, to focus the work clearly around social inclusion, and to begin to cover more of the core costs of the service.

Corporate Priorities

14. The work of the team contributes to a number of corporate objectives including strengthening local communities, developing opportunities for residents to experience York as a vibrant and eventful city and improving opportunities for a healthy, active lifestyle.

Implications

15. **Finance:** The cost of the Community Arts Team for 2010/11 is £68,020 and this is funded from within Arts & Culture base budget. The cost will remain unchanged by the report.
16. The report has no implications relating to:
- Human Resources
 - Legal
 - Crime and Disorder
 - Information Technology

Risk Management

17. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

18. The Executive member is asked to comment on and agree:
- The objectives set out in paragraph 9
 - The approach to organisational structure set out in paragraph 10
- Reason: To create a remit for a new "Inclusive Arts Service"

Contact Details

Author:

Gill Cooper
Head of Arts and Culture
Ext. 4671

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Charlie Croft
Assistant Director, Lifelong Learning and Culture
Ext. 3371

Report Approved Date 1. 3. 10.

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annex: Review of Activities of the Community Arts team