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Subject: Culture Asset Review and Culture Partnerships

Report to: Economic Development Committee 31st January 2022

Report by: Michelle Burdett, Head of Inward Investment

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper provides an overview of the existing financial support provided to cultural partners and institutions from across the Borough.

It also provides an overview of the funding sourced from the Arts Council England (£20,000) to develop an independent cultural asset study which aims to provide a clearer more comprehensive understanding of their roles, impact and capacity within Great Yarmouth and Gorleston and identification of any gaps.

Members are asked to:

1. Note the paper and agree to a one-year extension of funding in 2022/23 for the three current cultural partner organisations with a view to reviewing this budget in 2023/22.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 1.1** The Great Yarmouth borough has been growing its arts and culture presence steadily over the last 15-20 years, largely due to the hard work of a handful of individuals receiving relatively modest investment. Recently, the town has fairly rapidly become the centre of a series of high-level funding successes, bids and national interest. Currently there is Creative People and Places and Stronger Towns funding, successful theatres, an expanding NPO (with more looking to submit applications to Arts Council England), a cultural strategy delivering well with an integrated culture and tourism board, the submission of (an unfortunately unsuccessful) UK City of Culture 2025 bid and a clutch of Banksy artworks, with the accompanying press interest including a recent [Guardian article](#) recommending Great Yarmouth as a place to visit for art and culture. However, the council does not have the cultural specialist resource and therefore may not have adequate capacity to respond to this buoyant sector.
- 1.2** Great Yarmouth Borough Council currently invests c£125k per annum in 3 institutions in the borough as detailed below:

Partner	Value provided per annum	Type of agreement	End date of existing agreement	Monitoring Requirements
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Out There Arts	£58,500	Service level agreement	March 2022	KPIs as presented via an annual report and via Arts and Culture Liaison Board
St Georges Trust	£25,000	Funding Agreement	March 2022	Quarterly via the Arts and Culture Liaison Board and via formal reports against GBER requirements
Norfolk Museums Service	£42,800	Service Level Agreement	Rolling (no end date)	Presentation / reports to GY Areas Museums Committee
TOTAL	£126,300			

1.3 Together with other outdoor performance spaces, private sector venues and galleries, this investment is a key commitment for the council and is important for the area as a whole for the delivery of future cultural programming aimed at raising aspiration, supporting inclusivity and improving health & wellbeing of its residents. The Council also provided support for cultural events and winter programming (such as Fire on the Water), as well as strategic arts projects such as the Creative People and Places, Freshly Greated project which followed the success of the Making Waves Together project.

1.4 A fuller understanding of the impact of all performance spaces, venues and galleries including the three council funded assets is required to allow more long-term planning to take place. Officers have been successful in securing £20,000 from the Arts Council England to fund an independent cultural asset study to provide:

- A better idea of the role of the existing cultural assets in Great Yarmouth and Gorleston, both within and beyond their funding relationships.
- An assessment of the current cultural organisations operating or based in the borough and their offer aligned to the Culture, Heritage & Tourism Strategy's Delivery Plan but also outside of that reference document.
- An assessment of their capacity & at a high level (if relevant) their investment requirements to support growth in the sector.
- An understanding of the options to broaden the reach & impact of Great Yarmouth & Gorleston's performance spaces, venues and galleries including ideas for shared marketing and sectoral wayfinding.

1.5 The purpose of the cultural asset study project is to create a dynamic digital resource that maps the sector by mapping cultural, economic and brand potential and providing a clear remit for Council investment in arts and culture. Equally importantly, it should uncover unknowns about the potential benefits of cultural provision in the town and assess the capacity and capability to curate additional cultural programming, including identification of any gaps.

1.6 Fundamentally, the results of this and access to this resource will position the council and sector partners on the Culture & Tourism Board to make the most of the current funding opportunities available and work in partnership across a range of sectors and stakeholders.

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

2.1 Following an application process to the Arts Council England, the Council was successful in securing £20,000 to develop an independent Cultural Asset Study for the Borough. The Arts Council England board received this and signed this off in October 2021. The funding provided is a grant and does not require any council or partner match funding.

2.2 Following further communication between the Council and Arts Council England, an agreed timeline has been developed in which it is anticipated that a procurement exercise will take place. As can be seen in Annex A, the timeline does not allow for funding decisions for 2022/23 financial year to be made in respect of the £126,300 with the three existing cultural organisations.

3. NEXT STEPS

3.1 The allocations as detailed within section 1.2 for the 3 partners; Out There Arts, St Georges Trust and Norfolk Museums Service are within the Council revenue budget for 2022/2023. As such it is proposed that the existing agreements are extended for one year providing the Council sufficient time to carry out this cultural asset study and therefore seek an evidenced based approach to justifying the ongoing financial commitment for each partner from 2023/24 onwards.

3.2 In addition, this will also assist in bringing each agreement in line with each other, therefore ensuring a consistent approach for reporting, monitoring and contract management arrangements between each partner and the Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 As stated in section 3.1 – the next financial year’s allocation for each of the 3 existing partners is in the base budget for 2022/23. As such, extending the agreements would not be a financial burden on the Council’s resources but would not generate an ongoing saving either.

4.2 However, once the cultural asset study has been completed the feasibility study will provide an analysis of what, if any, each cultural partner needs to operate its asset, if there are funding and how best to ensure the Council supports the broader art and culture sector.

4.3 The Council has extremely limited resources and so the study would need to be realistic and proportional as to what the council can provide going forward. However, this would then be presented to both ELT and Members with a view to agreeing an allocation from the Council’s budget for future years.

5. RISK IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are limited risks to this approach as the cultural asset study will provide a sound independent review of what support the Council should be providing to cultural partners (plus any others subject to the study). The study will also provide evidence which can be used to seek external funding, develop new projects and programmes, and to forge supportive relationships with the wider sector working in the borough.

5.2 ACE’s National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) process also falls in line with the revised timetable with the NPO submission deadline in February 2022. As such, there is a risk that OTA won’t have an agreement for core funding from the Council for the length of their NPO application. However, given the Arts Council England are providing the funding to complete the cultural

asset study there is confidence that the Council will continue to support the sector as it grows in scope and reach.

- 5.3** Officers are aware that other borough-based cultural organisations may be applying for NPO status in this new ACE round of funding given that Great Yarmouth has been identified as a ACE Priority Place for investment and the growth in the sector as a whole.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** As detailed above, if Members are minded to support the extension of the existing partner agreements mirroring what has been provided to on an annual basis to date (see table above), the next step would be to agree a one year extension of each partners legal agreement accordingly on a like for like basis. This would need some legal resource but should not be a complicated process.

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	As part of ELT process
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	As part of ELT process
Existing Policies:	Culture, Heritage and Tourism Strategy
Financial Implications:	Yes – as detailed at section 4.
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Yes – as detailed in section 6.
Risk Implications:	As set out in the report
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	N/A
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Every Child Matters:	N/A

	January		February				March				April					May				June				July	
w/e	21st	28th	4th	11th	18th	25th	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th	17th	24th	1st	
Task and Finish Group convened																									
Brief reviewed / revised and goes live																									
deadline for proposals																									
shortlist																									
interviews																									
activity contracted out, 8 weeks to complete (second payment of £8,000)																									
MARCH 2022 SLAs CONCLUDE + 1 YEAR AGREEMENT																									
initial findings and core data presented to GYBC.																									
development and publishing of findings e.g. Open data source.																									
final report delivered to ACE (final payment of £2,000)																									