

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Culture and Tourism
2.	Date:	18 <sup>th</sup> February, 2014
3.	Title:	Arts Service – future delivery
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

### 5. Summary

To consider the future delivery of the Arts Service, including community arts, arts in regeneration and arts in health.

### 6. Recommendations

**That Cabinet Member agrees to cease funding for the Arts Service from 31.3.14, noting any possible opportunities for mitigating the impact on the local community.**

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## **7. Proposals and Details**

### **7.1 Background**

As part of the 2014/15 budget setting process and scrutiny of all non-statutory services, the Arts function which the council delivers has come under review. This function includes the development and delivery of arts in regeneration, arts in health and community arts.

The Arts Service currently consists of two members of staff who support the local community in delivering arts projects throughout the borough. Much of the work is in an advisory capacity, including funding sources and applications, project development and events. Where appropriate, the team offers direct help with writing funding bids.

In addition, the team manages a wide range of projects connected with health and regeneration and oversees these funded accounts (notably public art projects). The Service has been successful in drawing down external funding to support a wide range of local projects and initiatives and in supporting local organisations and individuals to do likewise.

The council currently has a published arts strategy which covers 2012 -15. This provides a framework for development and promotion of the arts in Rotherham in a difficult time of constrained resources. The development and implementation of the strategy is coordinated by the Arts service.

### **7.2 Proposal**

As this is a non-statutory service and in order to release required efficiency savings for 2014-15, it is proposed that funding for the Arts Service ceases from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and that consideration is given to effective managed withdrawal from appropriate projects.

#### **7.2.1 Impact**

- No further implementation of Council's arts strategy 2012-15
- Limited opportunities to access funding for the arts
- Comprehensive arts information currently held on Council's website will cease
- Consultation with communities and council's planning department on future section 106 funds specifically released for installation and maintenance of public art would need to be provided by alternative means (e.g. freelance artists)
- Risk to ongoing maintenance of existing "section 106" sites
- Reduced support for Gallery Town project
- Risk to current funded projects
- Reduced support for festivals, events and performing arts
- No representation with NALGAO/Arts Council
- Two members of staff displaced

### 7.2.1 Mitigation

Where possible, we would advocate a handover of relevant information, duties and responsibility to the arts communities within the borough. Though there will be an increased need for arts consortia, groups and practitioners to become self-reliant, there will be continuing opportunities for networks to develop and grow.

As part of the ongoing consultation with affected staff, options would be explored which could result in the time spent with individual projects becoming “self-financing”.

- With support from the arts team ROAR (Rotherham Open Arts Renaissance) was founded in 2005 and is now established within the town centre. The organisation currently receives external grant funding of £70,000 per year to facilitate arts activity, projects and provision in Rotherham. ROAR is also the town's only Arts Council NPO (National Portfolio Organisation). As such they have a direct link to the arts council and further funding opportunities from ACE.

Arts Council England makes clear its expectations of NPO's:

*We have expectations of National portfolio and Major partner museums as leading cultural organisations that collectively are a powerful force for developing the arts and culture. The certainty of public funding brings the responsibility of acting as leaders and role models, and our expectations reflect this.*

Consultation with ROAR may identify opportunities for them to develop their role further.

- Limited funding has been identified to support cultural events at Rotherham show. There may also be opportunities to supplement this in partnership with the Theatres service.
- Rotherham Town Centre events team and Rotherham Theatres will maintain their commitment to performing arts within the town, including offering advice where appropriate
- Where possible, officers within Planning, Regeneration and Culture will continue to take opportunities to promote and improve access to the arts

## 8. Finance

A Cessation of the service would generate a saving of £44,000 p.a.

Currently there is no budget other than for staffing. All non-pay expenses are picked up either through the Theatre service budget or as expenses claims from funding allocations.

It has been identified that there may be options for staff time to be financed through current or additional external funding.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

- A negative reaction from arts practitioners in the borough, which may affect the reputation of the council.
- Adverse reaction from the Arts Council, which may affect future funding opportunities
- Local partners unable to take on additional work e.g. due to capacity/skills issues
- Lack of knowledge and awareness within the council of funding opportunities for the arts
- Cessation of maintenance to existing public artworks, which could mean that the Council is failing in its responsibility
- Service unsuccessful in enabling projects to be self-financed, leading to budget pressures
- Reduction in access to and enjoyment of the arts

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The provision of community arts, arts in regeneration and arts in health supports the delivery of the “One town, one community” agenda, the stimulation of the local economy and provides opportunities for communities to improve their health and wellbeing, notably mental health. The provision of public art improves the quality of public spaces.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Staff have been informed of the overall nature of the report.

Arts Council have been contacted for comment

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