

For General Release

REPORT TO:	CABINET 20th June 2016
AGENDA ITEM:	10
SUBJECT:	Towards a Cultural Programme for Croydon
LEAD OFFICER:	Jo Negrini, Acting Chief Executive
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Timothy Godfrey
WARDS:	All
<p>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:</p> <p>The development of a cultural programme for Croydon including the redevelopment of Fairfield Halls delivers on the priorities of the Corporate Plan Ambitions for Croydon. It will address all three of the Corporate Plan Priorities: Growth: the development of Fairfield Halls is a major element of the regeneration of a key site and a thriving cultural sector and programme will impact positively on the economy of the Borough, creating spend and jobs. There will be opportunities for volunteering and participation, learning and personal development which contribute to the priority of Independence. Festivals and events promote community cohesion and this, along with the contribution arts will make to improvement of the public realm, will contribute to the priority of Liveability. It also responds to the findings and recommendations of the Opportunities and Fairness Commission and the draft Community Strategy and is a key part of delivering the economic strategy Growth for All. More widely, the cultural programme development in Croydon also responds to the Government White Paper on Culture, the priorities on culture in the Mayor of London’s Manifesto and the emerging new Tourism Strategy for London.</p>	
<p>FINANCIAL IMPACT</p> <p>Revenue funding of £250,000 is included within the 2016/17 budget to support the activity outlined in the report.</p> <p>The financial implications for the capital funding of Fairfield Halls have been covered in previous Cabinet reports in detail.</p>	
<p>KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: This is not a key decision.</p>	

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to

- 1.1 Endorse and agree the principles for a cultural programme for Croydon and note this as a step towards the development of a full Cultural Strategy for Croydon within the next 12 months which will then be reported to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.2 Note the update on the development of Fairfield Halls;
Delegate to the Executive Director Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member Culture, Leisure and Sports and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury, authority to approve any subsequent procurement strategy related to culture required to deliver the ambitions set out in this report

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to outline what the Council is trying to achieve in creating a cultural programme for Croydon, in shaping and achieving the vision for the future Fairfield Halls and in putting Croydon on the cultural map of London. This report recommends Cabinet's endorsement of the principles underpinning the developing cultural programme for Croydon (the programme) and provides an update on the key development of Fairfield Halls. It also prefigures a full cultural strategy for the borough and builds on key policy documents for the authority including the Corporate Plan.

Croydon is undergoing a period of unprecedented change and population growth and the role of culture in ensuring the success of regeneration is an important element of the Council's Growth strategy for development; Croydon needs more than increased and enhanced retail provision, providing both balance and alternatives. The refurbished Fairfield Halls will be at the heart of physical change whilst also forming the heart of the offer in the longer term. Culture will play a role in other regeneration sites, helping to improve people's experience of the redeveloped public areas; supporting elements of design or creating footfall and activity. A strong and active cultural sector encourages the growth of creative industries bringing high value employment and is a factor in encouraging inward investment.

The borough's cultural offer will be key in responding to the findings of the Opportunity and Fairness Commission (OFC) and the draft Community Strategy promoting equality, community cohesion and offering solutions to social isolation in Croydon. It is also central to the future life chances of children and young people in the borough.

Croydon is working with major partners, funders and stakeholders and will form new relationships on the back of its cultural ambitions for the benefit of its residents and its successful growth. The recommendations are provided for in the Council's current budget strategy and the programme will lever additional external resources for specific strands.

3. DETAIL

3.1 Towards a Cultural Programme

Croydon Council is shaping a deliverable cultural programme for the borough that will become an established calendar with milestones and a good seasonal spread. What the Council has achieved in the last two month period is to:

- Commission Boxpark to produce the main Ambition Festival for October 2016 with a high profile music offer
- Plan the delivery of an Ambition Fringe Festival – with a focus on visual arts
- Establish an Arts Partnership Fund to support cultural organisations in leveraging additional investment into Croydon to create events and make work

Over the next two year period, Croydon's programme will grow in scale and take its place in a wider London offer.

Programming will build on the strengths of the Borough, in particular the existing and emerging cultural and creative providers. Croydon is fortunate to have a growing sector with some talented key players with a strong commitment to the area and to its future; it has music promoters, programming and commissioning galleries, some stunning church spaces overseen by church leaders who wish to be part of a wider cultural programme and a concentration of Asian Dance schools for example. There are also active and engaged partners, co-commissioners and stakeholders to play a role in the support of a programme including the Brit School, the Business Improvement District organisation and Boxpark.

The role of the programme in the short to medium term, whilst the refurbishment of the Fairfield Halls is undertaken has an added objective which is keeping and growing audiences in the Borough. It is essential, as part of the lead up to Fairfield re-opening, to have a range of opportunities for audiences in Croydon that continue to engage.

Events programming in Croydon will use both existing cultural spaces such as Matthew's Yard and Stanley Halls and in particular making more intensive use of the Clocktower and Town Hall spaces. In Croydon it will also feature the use of other temporary and/or non-venue spaces and outdoor spaces. Croydon has a wealth of parks and open spaces and as part of the review of parks, the Council will explore the potential to create a series of licensed event spaces to facilitate and grow our Borough programming.

3.2 Fairfield Halls

The vision for the future Fairfield Halls is of a place that will be a cultural destination of choice for both residents and visitors to Croydon. It should feature a wide ranging year round programme that includes high quality music, theatre and dance of national significance with a classical music strand in particular that will do justice to the refurbished concert hall. Fairfield's programme will also be the home for key milestone cultural events for Croydon's communities, schools and other groups such as the Croydon Schools Dance Association and the Brit School.

The building itself will be open and welcoming, a destination for socialising and networking with a mix of attractive environments for children and families, for young

adults or for older visitors. There will also be conferencing as a secondary function, there to support the viability of the cultural programming and bring a broader range of visitors to the venue and the Borough.

It could also have a number of resident, partner or associate companies who would wish to make their home in what will be South London's premier performance venue. It could also be the home for a dance hub for Croydon and a focal point for cultural production.

Following Cabinet agreement to the plans for the refurbishment of the Fairfield Halls, the Council submitted the main planning application for the Fairfield development on 24 February 2016. The planning decision is due over the summer 2016. Further to this a planning application was submitted for the demolition of the multi-storey car park in January 2016 to ensure enabling works on the site could commence from July 2016. This application was approved in March 2016 and notice has been served on NCP who are currently running the car park facility. Delivery route for the scheme is also being finalised and the enabling works packages have been identified and are in the process of being procured. The enabling package of works will include:

- Site hoarding and signage
- Asbestos surveys – car park and Fairfield Halls
- Survey work e.g. structural, M&E
- Initial opening up works to Fairfield Halls
- Demolition of NCP car park
- Potential asbestos removal – Fairfield Halls

The timescales for the phase 1 programme of works is:

- Start on site – enabling works/demolition – July 2016
- Start on site – main works Fair Field homes/Fairfield Halls – November/December 2016
- Completion of phase 1 works – Autumn 2018

In leading the development of an operating model for the Fairfield Halls the Council is leading an extended soft market testing exercise over the summer; finding the best potential operating partners to work with to achieve the outcomes needed from the future Fairfield Halls. The Council will lead discussions with a range of commercial and other operators interested in all aspects of the running of Fairfield.

Later this month, the Council is also undertaking a Peer Advisory Review exercise with the Theatre's Trust who have appointed an expert panel of five industry specialists for the purpose. The Council's team will work closely with this to inform all aspects of the redevelopment of the Fairfield Halls; operating model and final design detail. Other venues and operating models across the country are also being considered in the development of what is best for Croydon.

There is a wide and high profile interest in the future of the venue, not only from residents in the Borough but from individuals and organisations in the Greater London region and nationally. The communications and engagement activity which will take place in parallel to the development will be key to keeping that audience informed and involved.

In terms of engagement activity to date, the Creative Director has met with just over 50, mainly local, cultural organisations and individuals and the future of Fairfield Halls has been a feature of all of those meetings and conversations. There have been, and continues to be, discussions with both the Fairfield Trust and individuals involved in Save Our Fairfield Campaign to take on board concerns and feedback on both design and future plans. There will be a further series of milestone and engagement events to continue to highlight the importance of Fairfield Halls as a cultural location and building throughout the closure period. The first to be announced in late June to take place in July immediately following closure.

The Theatres Trust Review to be held at the end of June is a key part of the Council's engagement strategy nationally as are the ongoing discussions with both Arts Council and the Greater London Authority on the future role of Fairfield Halls.

3.3 Community focus

The role of local community cultural events across Croydon is also key. There are already several well established community festivals and events and some exciting ambitions from the people leading them. The Council supports these through its Community Commissioning Fund already, a strong local community arts offer will be instrumental on delivering on the OFC report objectives to create vibrant, responsible and connected communities and tackle social isolation.

3.4 Regeneration sites

The draft Community Strategy and the findings of the OFC report both highlight the importance of arts and culture in a regenerated town centre. In addition to the activity element outlined above, there will be a focus on the physical development in the borough and the contribution of arts and culture to ensuring the success of the creation of new urban and public realm environments. 'A town centre that lifts the whole borough' is one of the themes of the OFC and having a 'clear strategy for arts and culture' identified as a key element of that. The current Local Plan supports the inclusion of public art and there will be a range of specific opportunities as part of the development sites coming forward over the next two to three year period.

3.5 Children and young people

Croydon is at a key point in the development of a Cultural Education Partnership, the Croydon Youth Arts Collective, which brings together the Council's Music and Arts Service, Museums and the Fairfield Trust outreach arm. This is one of 50 national pilots to benefit from Arts Council funding to develop a strong partnership model. The findings of its initial youth consultation research highlighted the importance of affordability and access to arts for young people and of their wish to engage with the regeneration agenda in Croydon for example. 'Leaving no child behind', the thematic objective from the OFC highlights the need for a focus on young people with special educational needs and work that supports mental wellbeing. There is a pattern of some strong individual initiatives for cultural education work, but a lack of connections and strategic partnership. The next stage of the Cultural Education Partnership will need to provide that leadership; broadening the range of partners and stakeholders and the reach of the programme across the borough.

3.6 Partnerships

There are several key partnerships that will be crucial to the success and impact of the cultural plans. The Council will work closely with the Arts Council in supporting the development of the cultural sector in particular; increasing Arts Council investment directly into our cultural organisations. The Arts Council will also take an advisory role in the future development of the Fairfield Halls.

Croydon Council will play a key role with London and Partners in the development of the next Tourism Strategy for London; supporting objectives to ensure that visitors to London spread across the outer reaches of the city, spreading and growing the economic benefit. The Council will also explore opportunities to gain a higher profile through the work of Visit London as the offer improves and expands.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) will also be a key partner for Croydon, supporting the work to develop a programme of events in the Borough through a range of schemes and ensuring that Croydon benefits from cultural initiatives. Croydon is well placed to be a satellite in larger, high profile London wide initiatives and should actively pursue those opportunities. Croydon's cultural ambitions also respond to the opportunities set out for arts, culture and creativity in the Mayor of London's manifesto document.

Croydon will also work with Brighton and Hove Council as part of the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership to raise the profile of the importance of culture in a regeneration investment agenda.

4. CONSULTATION

This report is informed by consultation carried out by the OFC, the draft Community Strategy, the Creative Croydon youth consultation, discussion with the Creative Network partnership, feedback from a Royal Society for the Arts discussion event (300 people), consultation with Members, key partners and council officers.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Budget available				
Expenditure	250	250		
Income				
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	250	250		
Income				
Remaining budget	0	0		
Capital Budget available				
Expenditure				
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure				
Remaining budget				

2 The effect of the decision

The 2016/17 revenue budget contains £250k of growth for culture within the borough and will be used to develop the cultural strategy and delivery of the events arising from this strategy.

The effect of the decision will confirm the framework for expenditure of the cultural budget.

3 Risks

Risk	Mitigation
Risks that without an interim programme the investment in the Fairfield is not maximised	Development and delivery of programme
That there are insufficient proposals for events and programmes to Arts Council and LBC	Ensuring good communications about the funding and development time given to working with proposals
Partnership funding oversubscribed	Strong criteria including partnership funding leverage Focus on seed funding and catalyst role
Competition from elsewhere drawing	Focusing on a quality, local and

Croydon audiences and participants	<p>concentrated offer</p> <p>Ensuring regularity and consistency</p> <p>Working with media and communications partners</p> <p>Engaging with London Tourism Strategy</p> <p>Keeping offer complementary</p>
Delay in the refurbishment and redevelopment programme	Close contract monitoring and oversight of the Project Board

4 Options

Option	Outcomes
Do nothing	<p>Regeneration schemes would risk creating unsuccessful public spaces</p> <p>Fairfield scheme could fail</p> <p>Cultural organisations could relocate</p> <p>Audiences move outside of the Borough</p> <p>Narrow development of nighttime economy offer</p> <p>Disparate cultural offer for young people</p> <p>No response to residents' expressed wishes</p>

5 Future savings/efficiencies

- A successful cultural programme will contribute to a successful economy, secondary spend, increased employment, business rates and the likelihood of inward investment
- Future increase in direct cultural investment from partners/funder organisations,
- Increase in financial sustainability of organisations and less reliance on council,

(Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer)

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

The Council Solicitor comments that there are no direct legal considerations arising from this report.

(Approved by: Gabriel MacGregor, Acting Council Solicitor & Acting Monitoring Officer).

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

(Approved by Adrian Prescod, HR Business Partner, for and on behalf of Director of HR, Resources department).

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

Significant elements of cultural work supported will be targeted with identified groups or communities on the basis of need. Several cultural providers already work in an equalities context; SLiDE a dance company working with adults and young people with learning difficulties, RISE gallery working with the national charity CRISIS on an initiative promoting the work of homeless people for example. In more general terms, the programme supported will be evaluated retrospectively in terms of equalities impacts and any future strategy would be subject to an Equalities Impact Analysis.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There are no negative environmental implications from the recommendations in this report. Some elements of cultural programming may focus specifically on sustainability; there have been initial discussion for example with the Body Shop on supporting some eco-arts initiatives. Any capital works arising from the recommendations of this report would be carried out in accordance with environmental sustainability planning policy.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

Arts and cultural interventions in the public realm would aim to have a positive impact in influencing public behaviour. A cultural element in the evening and night time offer in addition to that which is based around alcohol consumption has a positive impact in terms of diversifying the footfall and range of people in a town centre which can improve public behaviour. The development of cultural facilities such as the RISE Gallery in St George's walk has a positive impact in terms of increasing and diversifying footfall and natural surveillance.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- The plans outlined will maximise the impact of regeneration investment and ensure its success, particularly in the case of the Fairfield regeneration site.
- The recommendations build on initiatives and organisations that show strength and quality and have the potential to impact positively on Croydon.
- The recommendations are based on expressed and researched need and aspirations.
- The recommendations will increase the total investment in culture in Croydon to the benefit of its residents.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

No other options were formally considered and rejected

CONTACT OFFICER: Paula Murray, Creative Director

BACKGROUND PAPERS - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: none