

## For General Release

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>CABINET – 11 June 2018</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Cultural Plan Update</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>Shifa Mustafa, Executive Director - Place Paula Murray, Creative Director</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	<b>Cllr Oliver Lewis, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport</b>
<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON:</b> The services, programmes and plans outlined in this report deliver on all three of the corporate priorities. Growth: culture makes a significant contribution to the successful growth agenda through improving the case for inward investment and the Fairfield Halls specifically will be an engine for growth in Croydon's economy. Independence: many of the cultural projects supported through the partnership fund create supportive and educational opportunities for our residents. Initiatives supporting young people in terms of life chances, routes to employment and wellbeing are also supported. Liveability: Croydon's cultural offer is an increasingly important part of improving the borough as a place to live, work, study in and visit.	
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT</b> There are no additional financial considerations arising from this report.	
<b>KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.</b> This is not a key decision	
The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below: <b>1. RECOMMENDATIONS</b> The Cabinet is recommended to: 1.1 Note the direction of travel for the major elements of Croydon's cultural programme as outlined in the report and to Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place to initiate an engagement exercise on a Cultural Strategy for the Borough and following on from the outcome of the engagement, to develop a draft Cultural Strategy for presentation to Cabinet for consideration in advance of a consultation exercise on the Cultural Strategy for the Borough.	

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 There is a critical mass of cultural activity in Croydon both planned and in the pipeline, a galvanised and enthusiastic sector and resources in place to support a growing range of programmes and events. Croydon is well placed to realise some larger scale ambitions, following through on the strengths and potential in the borough such as the music industry. This report presents the main elements of that activity currently underway, outlines some areas for future development and proposes the development of a Cultural Strategy for the borough to draw this together.

## 3 DETAIL

### 3.1 Croydon's Cultural Sector

- 3.1.1 Croydon's cultural sector is continuing to develop in strength and diversity. It is made up of a range of organisations based across the borough from unique venues such as Stanley Halls to community arts partnerships such as CR7 in Thornton Heath to regular festivals such as Croydonites Festival of new theatre or annual events like Croydon Rocks. The sector's diversity is one of its strengths and there are several events that exemplify Croydon's different communities such as our annual Pridefest and the Croydon International Mela.
- 3.1.2 In the first year of establishing Croydon's **Cultural Partnership Fund**, which provides some matching funding for external funding bids, the council fund of £100,000 levered in an additional £250,000 for Croydon projects and programmes. In its second year of operation at £110,000, the fund brought in £390,000. The number of successful applications to the Arts Council and other funders has increased and there is improvement in both quantity and quality.
- 3.1.3 Croydon's **Culture Network**, a legacy of the process of bidding for the London Borough of Culture, is now a regular meeting of around 50 people individuals and organisations. The purpose of the sessions is for networking, keeping up to date with current initiatives and opportunities and it takes place monthly in different cultural venues around the borough. This provides both a channel into the sector and a collective voice of the sector.

### 3.2 Cultural Calendar

- 3.2.1 The Borough's cultural calendar has several established events now throughout the year and the range of content is increasing in its diversity. We will continue to work with national and international partners, for example, Remarkable Productions on the Croydon International Mela in July and Dance Umbrella. Dance Umbrella are this year bringing 'Everything that Rises Must Dance' to Croydon Boxpark in October, which is an event involving over 200 female dancers from across London.
- 3.2.2 Other events are consolidating and developing include:
- Following the success of Warhol Croydon, a large scale outdoor exhibition of temporary pieces inspired by the work of Andy Warhol which attracted 8,000 participants,

- Rise Gallery will be following up with another outdoor exhibition building on what is now known informally as 'The Croydon Collection' of permanent street art works. Due to take place in September this year, this will bring us one step closer to the claim of having the largest street art collection in the UK.
- Pride moves to a larger site this year in Wandle Park with an additional dance tent and a larger programme.
- Croydonites, the festival of new theatre, took place last month with audiences up to 50% on the figures from last year's festival and over 100,000 online contacts.
- The London Mozart Players will be bringing another LMP on the Move project building audiences across the borough.

3.2.3 This year will also see some firsts in new events for Croydon: The Festival of Peace taking place in the second half of June with a week long programme of events culminating in a festival finale day in Parkhill on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June. July sees the first wholly Croydon version of Tempting Failure, a unique biennial festival of performance art and in September we have our first spoken word and poetry festival led by the Thornton Heath based Well Versed Ink, called LIP: Living in Poetry.

### **3.3 Public Realm**

3.3.1 A number of public realm locations have been identified both as part of the Growth Zone funded programme of change and through a focus on supporting the night time economy as locations for cultural activity. College Square has been populated with special street furniture and will see a programme of small scale events and activity launching over the summer, this is a project that has been designed in collaboration with students from Central St Martins College of Art and Croydon College. A programme with local promoters, our Music and Arts Service and the Croydon Central BID (Business Improvement Districts) of live music and street theatre will feature in the temporarily pedestrianised area of the High St this summer; a targeted range of events aiming to change the way our public spaces are viewed and experienced particularly in the evening. Working with the Brit School we will also support pop up performances across the Borough later in the year.

### **3.4 Youth Arts**

3.4.1 Additional funding of £100,000 has been allocated as part of Croydon's cultural funds specifically to support youth arts activity in the Borough. We will be working alongside the Croydon Youth Arts Collective and through the newly appointed Youth Mayor amongst other partners in the allocation of this and aiming to double the fund. Croydon has the highest percentage of under 25s of any London Borough and this is a key priority for cultural activity through all areas in addition to this targeted fund.

### **3.5 Creative Enterprise Zone**

3.5.1 Croydon has been successful alongside 10 other local authorities in gaining some funding to research and create a plan for a Creative Enterprise Zone. In summary, this is a programme that puts measures in place to support cultural and creative organisations, particularly in terms of production, in a designated

area. This is currently at the research stage with an audit into the cultural and creative sector; looking at what provision currently exists and what is in the pipeline.

- 3.5.2 Key elements of the proposition would include the development of the Artist Studio Collective 100+ studio collective in the Grafton Quarter, gallery spaces – building on the success of organisations like Rise Gallery and TURF Gallery with the Croydon Art Store, their latest venture in the Whitgift Centre, other small scale venues planned for the town centre and Fairfield Halls. One of the sectors emerging strongly so far is music i.e. live music production and performance. Another key strand is the development of a programme of creative internships for young people. The area being focussed on in particular is part of the town centre as well as some district centre clusters.
- 3.5.3 The full plan will be submitted to the GLA by the end of July to compete for further funding in the region of £1million for delivery. Decisions will be made on this in October this year. Whatever the outcome of the funding bid, the plans and research developed as part of this process are helpful in creating a blueprint for making sure there is a significant cultural component in the regeneration in Croydon's key developments. The work developed will also feed directly into our Cultural Strategy which will be produced later this year.

### **3.6 Fairfield Halls (operational)**

- 3.6.1 A detailed update on the development was given in a report to Cabinet in March of this year. To add to that, the new venue director, Neil Chandler, has made significant progress in establishing relationships across the Borough in particular. Partnerships with two Croydon companies have been set up with Savvy Theatre and with SlIDE Dance Company. Both companies are exemplars in integrated disability arts practice and have had successful performance dates in Croydon in recent weeks and months. Their presence and work in Fairfield will have a positive impact for Croydon.
- 3.6.2 On a separate note, Neil Chandler has been appointed as the new Chair of Croydon BID. Having a chair from the one of the borough's major cultural organisations will be of major benefit to the development of the BID.

### **3.7 Croydon Cultural Partners**

- 3.7.1 Building on the level of commitment to the development of Croydon's Borough of Culture bid, **Croydon Cultural Partners** is a scheme to bring together much of the cultural activity in the borough and present it in a single programme. The purpose of this is to have a single proposal that really captures the range and diversity of what is happening in our borough to present to potential supporters and sponsors. The sponsorship pledges received for the Borough of Culture bid were a reflection of the willingness of local businesses to support local activity events and organisations.
- 3.7.2 **Croydon Cultural Partners** offers a way to capture this; there are opportunities to support Croydon's annual programme of flagship events, to support work with and by young people and invest in neighbourhood initiatives. This will launch formally in July and run for 2 years, aiming to achieve an additional £100,000 into culture in Croydon with four corporate partners already on board.

### **3.8 Future Cultural Ambitions**

- 3.8.1 As noted above, the importance of the music sector in Croydon is something that has been identified in the early stages of the work on the Creative Enterprise Zone, this is in terms of both production and performance. Croydon also has a strong Music and Arts Service supporting the development of our young musicians and its music heritage is also well known. In developing our plans and activities for Croydon, one of the models we might want to look at is the Music City model where a location builds proactively on all aspects of its music sector to create a vibrant economic engine of activity. This would include the development of venues, music production, performance opportunities, festivals, education and training and secondary industries. London as a whole is considered a music city, as is the likes of Nashville, Ontario and Cologne. As a further development of the creative enterprise zone work, it would be worth scoping this for Croydon to see how it might be delivered and resourced and what the benefits could be. Croydon has already been identified as an opportunity area in terms of music industry growth in the GLA cultural infrastructure audit.
- 3.8.2 In the nearer future, development work on a significant range of lighting interventions for both the town centre and some district areas is underway. Croydon-Lit will be a series of lighting pieces – some temporary and some permanent, to appear in key locations across the Borough and in the town centre. Pulled together in a strategy that includes elements of route marking and celebration of particular times or particular places or buildings, this will be developed over the next 6-12 month period. It will build on the success of projects such as the Thornton Heath Lighting Festival done in partnership with London Lumiere which attracted over 5,000 people to Trumble Gardens for a magical evening as well as focussing on major new routes and desire lines being created in the town centre as new developments take shape.

### **3.9 Cultural Strategy**

- 3.9.1 Croydon is now in a position where it would be helpful to develop a Cultural Strategy for the borough for a number of reasons:
- There is a groundswell of activity and a very active and engaged sector to work with
  - A strategy will be the place to bring together the range of initiatives and drivers for culture
  - The GLA is currently consulting on its overall Cultural Strategy for London and producing its cultural infrastructure plan for London – both of which provide useful and timely context for a strategy for Croydon.
  - More immediately, Croydon council will be developing its next Corporate Plan and we are at the start of a new administration
- 3.9.2 The proposed timescale for this would be to have a 3 year strategy in place for the start of the next financial year: Accordingly a delegation is sought to the Executive Director of Place to initiate an engagement exercise and following on from the outcome of the engagement, to develop a draft strategy for presentation to Cabinet for consideration prior to any consultation exercise which may be undertaken.

3.9.3 A proposed timetable for such work is set out below:

Produce draft for engagement and consultation	July 2018
Engagement and consultation period	August – end of October 2018
Finalise strategy for publication	November 2018
Ratification at Cabinet	December 2018
Launch of Strategy	January 2019

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

4.1 The Croydon Culture Network offers an ongoing engagement and consultation opportunity both on a formal and informal basis. The development of a Cultural Strategy for Croydon will build a consultation period in to the process.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

5.1 The majority of activity identified in this report will be funded from within existing budget. Additional funding will be brought in both directly through the Cultural Partners scheme and indirectly via the support given to third party organisations making bids for external funding to contribute to the activity in Croydon.

5.2 Funding for full delivery of the Creative Enterprise Zone plan would be subject to the competitive bid process. Decisions are made on this in October of this year. The full plan would not be delivered in the planned timescale if funding was not forthcoming.

5.3 Additional funding for progressing on the larger initiatives described at 3.8 would be sought from other sources such as the Growth Zone.

Approved by: Lisa Taylor, Director of Finance, Investment and Risk

#### **6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER**

6.1 There are no additional legal implications arising from the recommendations within the report within the report as any future strategy will need to be presented to Members for further consideration.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert, Head of Litigation and Corporate Law, for and on behalf of Jacqueline Harris-Baker, Director of Law and Monitoring Officer

#### **7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT**

7.1 There are no direct implications for staff at LBC in this report. However a strong and vibrant cultural offer enhances the reputation of Croydon and supports the employer brand of Croydon for both attraction and retention.

Approved by: Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 8.1 Much of the cultural work supported has a targeted impact in terms of equalities work. The partnerships outlined above between Fairfield Halls and two companies in Croydon who specialise in disability arts work will have significant positive impacts in these areas in terms of role modelling and integrated practice in particular.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 9.1 The environmental impact of events is considered as part of the event management planning. Initiatives that improve the public realm will have a beneficial impact in terms of how those public spaces are then cared for by the public.

## **10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT**

- 10.1 As outlined above in 3.3, targeted elements of Croydon's cultural programme are designed to support the development of a safe and diverse night time economy; increasing footfall, creating lighting projects, broadening the offer for example. Other parts of the programme are designed to take place in particular areas of the public realm that are in need of improvement and change. The ambition to develop Croydon as a Music City type destination, would have a beneficial impact on the night time economy as well.

## **11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION**

- 11.1 The plans outlined above are grounded in needs analysis and consultation and work with partners who are well connected to their communities, they address issues and challenges in Croydon and will create positive impacts in all areas.

## **12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- 12.1 The option not to apply for the Creative Enterprise Zone was considered, however, the aims of the programme are very much in line with Croydon's ambitions and priorities.

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**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:** None.

**APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT** None.