

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills and
Community Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 16th November 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise, Community
and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Preparations for Halton's Borough of
Culture in 2021

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Operational Director Communities and the Operational Director Economy, Enterprise and Property will update PPB Members on the preparations being made to deliver Halton's Borough of Culture year in 2021.
- 1.2 The update will highlight the emerging programme of activities and the views of PPB Members will be welcomed.
- 1.3 It will also consider potential risks and challenges that could have an impact on its successful delivery.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Members receive the update to be provided;**
- 2) Members consider how they can raise the profile of Halton's Borough of Culture across communities in the borough.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background to Borough of Culture

The award of Liverpool City Region Borough of Culture was inspired by the UK City of Culture programme, which followed Liverpool's European Capital of Culture in 2008. The new initiative was launched in 2018 as Liverpool celebrated its 10th Anniversary as the UK's only European Capital of Culture.

The Borough of Culture initiative is a non-competitive process, which will rotate around the City Region with the aim of encouraging each Borough to develop collaboratively its local talent and potential, while reflecting the ambitions and aims of the Regional Culture and Creativity Strategy, which looks to build sustainable capacity across the City Region.

The Borough of Culture years are allocated across the City Region as follows:

- St Helens – 2018
- Wirral – 2019
- Sefton - 2020
- Halton - 2021
- Knowsley – 2022

The overall aim of the programme is to stimulate talent, aspiration and promote creativity and economic growth through cultural engagement and activity across the City Region. Each Borough needs to weave five key elements into their creative programme:

- Children and Young People – accessing, enjoying, learning and thriving through culture and creative engagement with skills and talent pathways
- Positive Outcomes – wellbeing, health, education, cohesion and future of work
- Communities – increased participation, particularly the ageing society
- Distinctiveness of Place – promoting the creative and cultural offer to local people and visitors
- Infrastructure – leaving a legacy through better infrastructure for culture and creativity

The aim of Halton's Borough of Culture year is to:

increase participation in quality cultural activity across Halton, helping more people to experience the arts and to benefit from the role that culture can play in transforming lives - improving health and wellbeing, reducing social isolation, increasing community cohesion, inspiring creativity, supporting learning and making Halton a great place to live and work.

It is proposed that this will be delivered under the banner of 'Celebrate Halton' and will look to celebrate Halton's past, present and future through a programme of activity, ranging from small community-led activities to large-scale events, which bring in national/international artists.

3.2 **Progress to Date**

- a) An Internal Project Group has been established
- b) A Programme Development Organisation Art Reach has been appointed

ArtReach is a contemporary cultural development agency with a mission to make great art possible and accessible, connecting art with grassroots and diverse communities to forge creative engagement. ArtReach is a National Portfolio Organisation with Arts Council England.

Artreach's responsibilities are:

- To develop a high quality, engaging, and relevant programme that meets the Borough of Culture aims.
- To commission artists to create work.
- To provide advice and guidance on content and programming.

c) Initial consultation with partners has been undertaken

Heart of Glass were commissioned to undertake an some initial in autumn 2019. A series of workshops were held with local forums – Halton Heritage Partnership, Halton Local Cultural Education Partnership, Halton Primary Arts Network and residents input sought at events and in libraries, with visitors and staff.

A report was produced and some of the suggestions made incorporated into the programme development. Artreach are now picking up individual conversations with some of those who attended the consultation sessions to explore partnership involvement in the programme.

d) A Programme of Activities

This is currently being worked up in more detail; the full programme is subject to securing match funding – see below.

- **Made in Halton** (small grants commissioning local artists work)
- **Halton MakeFest** (local makers market at Halton Lea library)
- **Harmony Halton** (Music weekender in grassroots venues)
- **Bridge Festival** (Outdoor Event & Parade on SJB)
- **North West Vintage Rally** (with new Steam Punk attraction)
- **Festival 10:15** (young people led festival)
- **Halton Light Event** (to be held at Norton Priory)
- **Explore Festivals** (Libraries Programme)
- **Halton Heritage Hub** (with young person led strand)
- **Culture HQ** (shop space for event and workshops at Halton Lea)
- Small scale **public art commissioning** (murals etc)
- **Museum of the Moon**

e) Match Funding

An allocation of £200k has been made by the CA with an expectation that match funding is also secured to enhance the programme.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 If match-funding sources are not secured, a reduced programme will be implemented.

Possible additional funding to secure events staff/pay for casual staff may be required.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

One of the five core elements of all BoC programmes is aimed at Children and Young People – accessing, enjoying, learning and thriving through culture and creative engagement with skills and talent pathways. A Cultural Youth Voice panel is being developed as part of the stakeholder involvement for the year.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

One of the five core elements of all BoC programmes is Positive Outcomes – including for education and future of work – it is anticipated that a focus on the cultural offer locally, along with the introduction of nationally renowned companies and artists will kick-start skills development and employment opportunities in the creative industries.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

One of the five core elements of all BoC programmes is Positive Outcomes – including for wellbeing and health – it is anticipated that the programme will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents whether through passive or active engagement.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

N/A

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The ethos of the Borough of Culture programme is that it offers opportunities for the whole community through a range of activities and events, the majority of which are offered free of charge and at a range of venues across the Borough.

**9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.