

Report to Scrutiny

Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information

No

Subject of Report:	Arts provision in the borough- a new cultural strategy
Meeting:	Scrutiny Review Panel 4 – 2019/2020: Leisure – 26 February
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Scrutiny Officer:	Harjeet Bains, Scrutiny Review Officer, bainsh@ealing.gov.uk , 0208 825 7120
Cabinet Responsibility:	Cllr. Julian Bell, Leader
Director Responsibility:	Mark Wiltshire, Director of Community Development, WiltshireMa@ealing.gov.uk 02088258197
Brief:	To consider an update on the arts provision in the borough
Recommendations:	<p>The panel is invited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to consider the information provided on the arts provision; and - make recommendations for further improvements and the development of a new culture strategy accordingly.

1. Opportunities for a new cultural strategy

1.1 The value of the arts and culture

1.1.1 Value and impact

When we talk about the value of arts and culture to society, we always start with its intrinsic value: how arts and culture can illuminate our inner lives and enrich our emotional world.

However, we also understand that arts and culture has a wider, more measurable impact on our economy, health and wellbeing, society and education.

It's important we also recognise this impact to help people think of our arts and culture for what they are: a strategic national resource.

1.1.2 Economy

The UK's booming creative industries makes a record contribution to the economy. Industries including arts and film, TV and radio, and museums and galleries are all part of this thriving economic sector, which in 2016 was worth almost £92bn (figures published by the Department for Digital, Media, Culture and Sport).

The creative industries' contribution to the UK was up from £85bn in 2015 and it is growing at twice the rate of the economy.

The sector is now one of our fastest growing industries and continues to outperform the wider UK economy.

1.1.3 Health and Wellbeing

A 2014 impact study from Arts Council England showed that those who had attended a cultural place or event in the previous 12 months were almost 60 per cent more likely to report good health compared to those who had not.

1.1.3 Society

The same study showed that there is strong evidence that participation in the arts can contribute to community cohesion, reduce social exclusion and isolation, and/or make communities feel safer and stronger.

Employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment.

1.1.4 Education

Taking part in drama and library activities improves attainment in literacy. Taking part in structured music activities improves attainment in maths, early language acquisition and early literacy.

Participation in structured arts activities increases cognitive abilities.

Students from low income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree than children from low income families who do not engage in arts activities at school.

These are just a few examples. The impact of arts and culture is significant and measurable.

1.2 Strategic context

1.2.1 Arts Council England's new 10-year strategy

On Monday 27 January 2020, Arts Council England (ACE) published its new 10-year strategy for 2020-2030. The strategy's themes chime with the emerging 'Thriving Communities' strategy and there is an opportunity to align a new cultural strategy to both.

The key differences in the new strategy include more emphasis on supporting people individually and at every stage of their life, championing a wider range of culture, and increasing spending and support for libraries.

It also aspires to give communities in every "village, town and city" more opportunity to design and develop the culture on offer there.

The strategy lists four principles guiding whether ACE will invest public money: "ambition and quality", "inclusivity and relevance", "dynamism", and "environmental responsibility".

The strategy lists a number of important issues requiring action. They include:

- Persistent and widespread lack of diversity across the creative industries and in publicly funded cultural organisations.
- Difference in understanding of the terms "arts" and "culture" across the country, with many seeing the "arts" as only the high arts.
- Big differences in cultural engagement, geographically and socioeconomically.
- Unequal opportunities for children outside school across the country.
- The often fragile business models of publicly funded cultural organisations.
- A retreat from innovation, risk-taking and sustained talent development.

1.2.2 Mayor of London's Culture Strategy 2018

The Strategy has four priorities:

- Love London - more people experiencing and creating culture on their doorstep
- Culture and Good Growth - supporting, saving and sustaining cultural places
- Creative Londoners - investing in a diverse creative workforce for the future
- World City - a global creative powerhouse today and in the future

1.2.3 London Borough of Culture

Announcements of the next successful awards for the London Borough of Culture (LBOC) for 2021 and 2023 will be in February 2020. If the scheme continues, applications for 2025 and 2027 are likely to open around 2022.

This gives us time to build a strong foundation for applying to the next rounds.

Current published outcomes for LBOC are:

- More Londoners getting involved in creative activities
- a borough where people are proud to live and work
- partnerships between culture, business, community and voluntary sector
- putting culture at the core of local plans
- outstanding artists making exciting new work
- telling the story of local people and places
- creating social connections by taking part in culture
- improving health and well-being through arts and culture

1.2.4 A new cultural strategy should link to 'Thriving Communities'

Work is underway to develop a Thriving Communities Strategy 2020 – 2024. This will set the strategic direction for Thriving Communities for the next four years. There are currently three emerging themes: community connections and social action; participation and engagement in decision making and; catalysts – facilitating and enabling change. Programme

objectives are in the early stages of development and might be around:

- Citizens leading their neighbourhoods in an inclusive way through social action and participating in decision making
- Shift in culture to enabling and facilitating citizens in social action
- More people active in their local area, supporting others and contributing to stronger neighbourhoods
- Improved health and well-being through inclusive social networks and activities
- Coordination across public, private, voluntary and community organisations to maximise the positive impact of public sector resources and community strengths
- Innovation at a local level, change how the council engages and supports residents to connect and be involved

1.2.5 A new cultural strategy should link to priorities of ‘vision for place’

The vision for the new Place Directorate offers opportunities for a new cultural strategy to align with. It was set out as follows:

- Connecting communities to resources, new opportunities and each other
- Housing developments that emphasise strengthening relationships between neighbours through arts and culture
- Connect culture with employment and skills services that help connect people to others already in work and help them foster a network of professional contacts
- Safer communities: use arts and culture to tackle feelings of insecurity that inhibit neighbourliness
- Use arts and culture to remove barriers; build connections and specific interventions

1.3 current arts and culture provision

1.3.1 Ealing Council’s Arts and Cultural Strategy 2013-2018

- The previous Cultural strategy 2013 - 2018 has expired and therefore a new framework is needed. This is a timely opportunity to link the new cultural strategy to the new Thriving Communities strategy of the new Place Directorate as well as to Arts Council’s new 10-year strategy which has a new emphasis on creative people and creative places. The previous strategy aims were to:

- Enable opportunities for participation and local involvement
- Maximise contribution that the arts, culture and heritage make to Ealing
- Build capacity to attract funds and partnerships
- Raise awareness of Ealing's cultural offer

The heritage offer in particular has been progressed successfully with Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery and Gunnersbury.

1.3.2 Ealing's Arts scene

- We do not hold a directory of arts and cultural groups. Local artists and cultural organisations are not obliged to inform the council of their funding sources, whether grants or sponsorship. Therefore, it is not possible to provide data in relation to investment and funding of the sector without undertaking a mapping exercise. Visible players are Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery, Gunnersbury Museum, The Questors Theatre, Open Ealing, Artification BEAT Art Trail, The Ealing Club, The Hanwell Cavern, Ealing Arts and Leisure, Hanwell Hootie, Desi Radio, Ealing Summer Festivals (Jazz, Blues, Comedy as well as Greenford Carnival, Acton Carnival and London Mela), Ealing Studios, University of West London (London College of Music and the London School of Film, Media and Design), the Martinware collection at the Dominion Centre, and a large number of individual artists and creatives living in the borough. Most of these groups are supported by the council through in-kind support and through the ward forums.
- The Council's approach to supporting cultural activity has been to enable and facilitate arts activity in the borough rather than directly fund and resource arts activity. There is currently no designated arts development budget. However, lots of arts activity takes place in the borough through schools, independent arts organisations, community groups, amateur arts organisations and the professional sector.

1.3.3 Festivals and Events

- Ealing Council supports the Festival and Events programme through a contractor, The Event Umbrella, who run the Ealing Summer Festivals and provide advice to community groups staging local events.
- A 2017 consultation to inform Ealing's LBOC bid showed that respondents cited 'festivals' as what was distinctive about Ealing.

1.3.4 Heritage

- The Cultural Strategy 2013 - 2018 committed the Council to secure

investment and regeneration of Pitzhanger Manor (Grade I) and Gallery and Gunnersbury Park and Museum (Grade II). Both sites were completed in 2018 and are now open to the public after being transferred to the community.

- For Pitzhanger, Ealing Council invested £4.1m towards a total capital cost of £11.6m And for Gunnersbury, Ealing Council invested £3.7m towards a total capital cost of £12.2m. Gunnersbury is jointly owned with Hounslow.
- In addition to the capital funding, Ealing Council has a management agreement in place.

Gunnersbury	£0,355m per annum
Pitzhanger Manor and Gallery	£0,427m per annum

1.4 opportunities and gaps

1.4.1 challenges and gaps

- There seem to be several evidence gaps:
 - There is an opportunity to create a framework that standardises audience/visitor data collection across the borough's public, private and voluntary sectors to develop a robust evidence base for culture. The Audience Agency's Audience Finder segments (used by Arts Council England) would be an ideal enabling tool for this. <https://audiencefinder.org/>
 - There is an opportunity to map the economic impact of culture of Ealing's museums, libraries and cultural organisations and how they contribute to the wider economy.
 - There is an opportunity to instigate research that quantifies the savings to the public purse in terms of people's happiness, wellbeing and improved health through preventative arts and culture interventions, or other contributions to public services.
 - There is an opportunity to commission more detailed mapping beyond the GLA's Cultural Infrastructure Map, to map cultural activity (beyond physical cultural buildings)
 - There is an opportunity to collect data on the use of digital technologies and how arts and cultural organisations are using this technology to become more resilient.
 - The most recent Active Lives Survey (2015-17), a nationwide assessment of involvement in sporting and cultural activities, shows that across the borough fewer than two-thirds (72%) of adults attended an arts event or a museum or gallery or spent

time doing an arts activity in the last twelve months. Cultural participation in Ealing is slightly lower than the London average of 74%. This is a reasonable starting point.

There is an opportunity however to evaluate equality and diversity: those who are most actively involved with the arts and culture that we invest in tend to be from the most privileged parts of society; engagement is heavily influenced by levels of education, by socio-economic background, and by where people live. There is an opportunity to test these assumptions and recommend actions to address imbalances.

- Compared to most other London Boroughs, Ealing benefits from limited cultural capacity and infrastructure with no obvious cultural hubs (for example music venues, theatres, arts centres, galleries, Arts Council funded arts organisations (that benefit from core ACE funding), a hub or conglomeration of artist work spaces, a focal hub for digital and creative industries, etc.) In the absence of these, some isolated initiatives have sprung up. These, however, are not in a position to provide sufficient focus and leadership to transform Ealing.
- Whilst there are some good individual activities there seems limited evidence of a strong collective network or strategic linked-up working from the cultural sector
- There seems to be no art in the public realm (either permanent or temporary).
- There is an assumption that there is choice outside of the borough and that people spend time and money there
- There is an opportunity to build culture into the local plan.

1.4.2 Opportunities and potential

- The Cultural Strategy should be a Strategy of Cultures (in the plural), that connects and empowers all communities. The strategy should reflect an ambition of and a journey towards a democracy of cultures.
- The strategy should be developed through a partnership approach: in terms of evaluating the previous strategy; involving local people and artists in the developing of the strategy; and to embed and deliver outcomes. (One of the criteria for the Mayor of London's London Borough of Culture programme is that bids have a clear plan for involving local people in shaping the cultural programme.)
- Rather than a separate document, the strategy should resemble

more a cross-council framework that places culture at the heart of all the council's departments and acts as the glue, particularly around place-making and place-shaping, creative economy, young people and around thriving communities.

This will bring it in line with the emerging Thriving Communities strategy of the Place Directorate, the aims of which include citizens leading their neighbourhoods in an inclusive way through social action and participating in decision making; a shift in culture to enabling and facilitating citizens in social action; innovation at a local level; change how the council engages and supports residents to connect and be involved.

*A good **example** of such a way of working and framework is in Leeds:*

Leeds City Council's new Culture Strategy was developed through a co-production model, involving extensive consultation with the cultural sector and local communities.

It places culture at the heart of all policy-making for Leeds – from highways to planning and community cohesion, with the aim of creating more prosperous, healthier, stronger and happier communities. It acts as a framework for policy change, enabling a more innovative, vibrant, cost-effective and collaborative approach to place making. <https://www.local.gov.uk/developing-cultural-strategy-through-co-production-model-leeds-city-council>

- However, against the backdrop that Ealing is currently not seen as 'a destination' and that there is limited cultural infrastructure (in comparison with most other boroughs), there are significant opportunities for more visible and spectacular interventions and signature moments (in partnership with national organisations) that combined start telling a unique story of Ealing. Outdoor arts interventions and art in the public realm can be key tools to achieve this. This should link to place making and regeneration.

As there is currently no central focal point such as a professional receiving theatre or arts centre in the borough, a schedule of animation and activation events could be programmed. The purpose of such a series of interventions of differing scales and in different places is multifold: to test out models of practice to inform the development of policy and strategy; to help residents see Ealing differently; to inform audience impact for the cultural strategy; to inform future discussions around the role of culture in planning and place making; to think in a creative way of where culture could happen (car parks, parks, hoardings, walls, libraries, community centres, schools, squares, shopping centres, empty shops, etc).

*A good **example** of place-shaping activation events (without a*

'traditional' venue as a focal point) is the regeneration area around New Covent Garden Market and Battersea Power Station in Nine Elms <https://nineelmslondon.com/arts-and-culture/>

- There is potential to strengthen the night-time economy.
- Increase Ealing's profile and reputation as a cultural destination by providing quality cultural programming that draws people into the borough. Ealing council could employ an independent creative producer on a flexible, independent part time contract, to help activate and animate and activate a series of public (and hidden) spaces across the borough for different audiences, as a test bed for a new cultural strategy and with a view to learning more about what audiences might like and how spaces across the borough might perform (footfall/suitability) to having activity programmed within them.
- Employ innovative new ways to engage stakeholders in the creation of a new cultural framework. For example, through commissioning a digital art installation as a fun and creative way to ask residents critical questions about the development of arts and culture within their home borough. This would ensure a wider diversity of people is reached. This will ensure that the viewpoints of a larger group and more diverse representation of people will be captured (in comparison with the more usual consultation meetings or surveys that are sent to and completed by often the usual stakeholders). *A good **example** of such innovative consultation process is Mystic Joe, commissioned by Crawley Borough Council <https://joemcalister.com/mystic-joe/>*
- Rise of pop up culture, graffiti, murals: Graffiti art and murals are already becoming a focal point and possible Unique Selling Point (USP) to be further capitalised on - particularly in the Acton area.
- Untapped potential for building on Ealing's cultural heritage, most pertinently around film and music. This would also support aims around strengthening the creative economy.
- Putting the groundwork in place to be in a better to apply to LBOC. In 2017, Ealing unsuccessfully applied to LBOC. Feedback from the GLA was that he bid lacked evidence of ownership across the whole council, not just culture the culture team and also lacked evidence of strong involvement of grassroots.
- A 2017 consultation to inform Ealing's LBOC bid showed that respondents cited 'cultural diversity' as what was distinctive about Ealing. What is the cultural distinctiveness of our 7 town centres? And how could that distinctiveness come together to form a coherent, distinctive and attractive story for Ealing as a whole?
- It is important that we develop cultural capital (<https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/what-is-cultural-capital/>)

beyond the borough's physical locations. Returning to the principle of 'a strategy of cultures', it will be paramount that culture is defined across broader civil society as well as across the public, private and third sectors. Communities in Southall, Northolt and Perivale for example need to have equal opportunities to engage with art and culture that is relevant to their identities, history and culture as those living in central Ealing.

- Opportunity for growth: 10,000+ businesses and c. 150,000 people work here, including 56,000 travelling in to the borough. Businesses and their workers are important - we still need to better connect with as partners to build a better borough; and as participants and audiences for our cultural offer. (From LBOC 2017 bid)
- Opportunity for growth: Ealing's creative sector represents 23% of West London's economy; 2,275 companies in the borough are in the 'creative' category providing 15% of the borough workforce. Our proximity to central London, improved transport links with the coming of Cross Rail, high speed internet and flexible working means that Ealing has the potential to attract creative/cultural businesses. (From LBOC 2017 bid)
- Opportunity for growth: We want to improve the conditions for cultural businesses to thrive and stay local and get the message that Ealing is culture friendly.
- Strengthen the creative economy: exploiting commercial income from Ealing's histories around film and music remain untapped (Arts Council's Grassroots Music report). Future digital and creative industries can be encouraged and supported through the provision of low-cost workspaces and establishing of co-working hubs
- Significant building development in the Borough: Embed culture in planning and place shaping though including capital and ongoing revenue requirements at application stage (in line with the emerging GLA guidance on how to use the planning system to secure cultural infrastructure and workspace. This GLA document will set out an approach to using planning conditions, planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy to secure a positive outcome.)
- Creation of a culture network/culture board/culture task group; with a flexible shape, like Task & Finish groups, around particular themes and projects (laying the groundwork for a London Borough of Culture bid for 2025 or 2027). The group could also act as a peer learning network, have invited speakers and workshops to develop members' skills and in general, aid collaborative and collegiate working across the borough.
- Heritage sites such as Gunnersbury and Pitzhanger have untapped potential to become buzzing hubs which add footfall and contribute

to the wider economy (licencing and land rules may need to relax)

- Arts Council's new 10-year strategy with new foci on creative communities, everyday creativity, arts and health and place making extend cultural participation
 - by making a diverse range of cultural opportunities available and attractive to a wider range of local residents, and engaging new audiences with the borough's cultural offer.
 - By connecting and strengthening the community-based cultural offer – by building connections and capacity amongst local cultural groups across the borough. Arts can bring people together, address divides
- Environmental agendas and Ealing Council's Climate emergency: lots of parks, open spaces, squares, car parks, roof tops, allotments that can be locations for cultural activity around such themes

2. Legal Implications (Must include any value for money implications)
None

3. Financial Implications (Must include any value for money implications)

4. Other Implications
(Include all other relevant implications including risk management; community safety; links to strategic objectives; equalities and community cohesion; staffing and workforce; property and assets; consultation)

5. Background Papers
(This is a statutory requirement – please include the public documents referred to in writing the report, officer research and advice documents which Members or Members of the Public may request from the report author).

Consultation

Name of Consultee	Department	Date Sent to Consultee	Date Response Received from Consultee	Comments Appear in Report Para:
Internal				
Mark Wiltshire	Director of Community Engagement	29 January	30 January	Throughout
Connor McDonagh	Assistant Director Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning	30 January		
Cllr Jasbir Anand	Cabinet Member for Culture	30 January		
Chris Bunting	Parks and Leisure	24 January		
Christopher Neale	Finance	13 February		
Chuhr Nijjar	Legal	13 February		
External				
A N Other	Voluntary Organisation			
Police, etc.				

Report History

Decision Type: For Information	Urgency item? No		
Authorised by Cabinet Member:	Date Report Drafted:	Report Deadline:	Date Report Sent:
XX.XX.19	31.01.19	17.02.19	XX.XX.19
Report No.:	Report Author and Contact for Queries:		
	Jan De Schynkel, Arts and Culture Manager deschynkelj@ealing.gov.uk extension 6169		