



**CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL**  
**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**  
**COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A meeting of the **STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ARTS STEERING GROUP** will be held at the Virtual on **MONDAY, 14TH FEBRUARY, 2022 at 2.00 PM**

Contact: Sarah Handy - Council Business Unit, Democratic Services (07385401942)

**LIST OF ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**Note:**

1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest; and
2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they **must** notify the Chairman when they leave.

**2. MINUTES**

To approve as an accurate record, the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**(Pages 3 - 6)**

**3. AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE MUNI**

An update on the progress of the Muni - Awen Cultural Trust are invited to discuss the progress to date.

**4. ARTIS COMMUNITY CYMUNED**

Artis Community Cymuned are invited to discuss their provision across the County Borough and the YMCA development. Presentation to follow.

**5. TO CONSIDER THE ARTS COUNCIL WALES INVESTMENT APPLICATION**

**(Pages 7 - 14)**

**6. AN UPDATE ON LIBRARIES AND COLLECTIONS IN RCT**

Presentation to follow.

**7. URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances is of the opinion should be considered at the Meeting as a matter of urgency.

**8. CHAIR'S REVIEW & CLOSE**

To reflect on the meeting and actions to be taken forward.



**Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication**

**Circulation:-**

Members of the Committee:

County Borough Councillors Councillor R Lewis (Chair), Councillor A Crimmings (Vice-Chair), Councillor J Brencher, Councillor G Hughes, Councillor S. Rees-Owen, Councillor J Rosser, Mr C Coppock and Ms M Dunning

Mr C Coppock – Independent Member

Ms M Dunning – Arts Council Wales

Ms L Davies, Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services

Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services

Ms A Gould, Theatre Programme and Audience Development Manager

Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication

Ms A Hayes, Arts & Creative Industries Manager

Mr P Mee, Group Director Community & Children's Services

Ms C O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager

Mr A Williams, Theatre Operations and Development Manager



## **RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ARTS STEERING GROUP**

Minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group held on Monday, 27 September 2021 at 2.00 pm at the Virtual.

### **County Borough Councillors - Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group Members in attendance:-**

Councillor R Lewis (Chair)

Councillor A Crimmings    Councillor J Brencher  
Councillor S. Rees-Owen    Councillor G Hughes

### **Co-Opted Members in attendance:-**

Mr C Coppock  
Ms M Dunning

### **Officers in attendance:-**

Ms C O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager  
Mr A Williams, Theatre Operations and Development Manager  
Ms W Edwards, Service Director – Community Services  
Ms A Hayes, Arts & Creative Industries Manager  
Ms A Gould, Theatre Programme and Audience Development Manager

## **10 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed Members of the Strategic Culture & Arts Steering Group to the meeting and noted apologies had been received from County Borough Councillor J Rosser.

## **11 Declaration of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, County Borough Councillor J. Brencher declared the following personal interest:  
"I am a Trustee of the YMCA"

## **12 Minutes**

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

## **13 Serving our Communities during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The Strategic Arts & Culture Manager provided a verbal update on the position of the Arts Services during the Covid-19 pandemic. She informed Members of additional staff Members who had joined the team during the time and continued

to explain how the service had continued to offer a provision over the last 18 months.

The Theatre Operations and Development Manager provided an update on Theatres and informed Members of the plan to adopt a cautious approach to re-open. He acknowledged the high levels of cases still experienced by Rhondda Cynon Taf and the awareness of the impact any large-scale re-opening may have on case numbers and hospitalisations. He outlined details of plans to re-open cinema provisions on a socially distanced basis towards the end of October 2021 allowing the service to test systems and processes in place to ensure maximum safety of guests and staff can be achieved with a continual building of provision towards Christmas including themed films.

He continued to outline the plan for live shows informing Members of the intention to start in February 2022 with a capacity of 400-600 audience members although it was noted that during this time levels of CO2 would be monitored as numbers of audience members increase to continually ensure safety. The complexities of providing live shows in a safe environment were also covered with the Theatre Operations and Development Manager detailing how discussions will need to be held to determine cast sizes and backstage practicalities including refund policies. He concluded by informing Members of the intention to provide a cautious approach to resuming performances ensuring public health and safety is always at the forefront of decision making.

The Theatre Programme and Audience Development Manager also provided a verbal update for Members on the Christmas offer from the Service and gave details of the Pantomime. She advised that whilst frustrating that schedules have been moved from 2020 to 2022 external agents have been supportive of the decisions made. However, she also acknowledged the desire for these providers to return to providing full capacity events. She informed Members that filming for the Christmas Pantomime this year was progressing well with the schedule due to conclude this week. She thanked all those involved in the Pantomime and was pleased to report that the production had so far supported 24 freelancers. British Sign Language and captioning will be available on the production.

The Arts & Creative Industries Manager also provided Members with an update detailing the support they provided as part of the SHEPS programme during the Summer. Members were also informed of the positive outcomes achieved through the 'Summer of Fun' scheme of workshops held at Aberdare Coliseum. Members were provided with detailed information of various projects in partnership with Communities for Work and Town Centres and regeneration.

Members were invited to ask any questions and make comments. One Member queried the support of providing services in Welsh and whether the announcement to delay re-opening Theatres was premature given the current lockdown levels and comparison to other venues who are operating at full capacity. The Service Director – Community Services explained that the decision has been taken given the context of high levels of cases still prevalent in Rhondda Cynon Taf and with consideration for the facilities available within the Theatre buildings which she compared to some other facilities that may have more modern ventilation systems. She added that the situation was able to be reviewed should case numbers improve however the safety of guests and staff Members would continue to be the priority.

Another Member queried the links between Town and Community Councils and

the Arts programmes on offer. The Strategic Arts & Culture Manager advised that they are working with the Councils Events team to look at the offer for Christmas events in Town Centres and additional seasonal workshops where possible. The Service Director – Community Services also added that there have been initial strategic meetings between groups in Pontypridd to look at how collaborative working can be facilitated with regards to arts and culture events.

The Chair thanked Officers for their comprehensive updates and responses and Members noted the information provided.

#### 14 **An update from the Eisteddfod**

With the aid of a power point presentation, the Eisteddfod Chief Executive provided Members with an update on the Eisteddfod 2024 to be held in Rhondda Cynon Taf. She provided background information to the Eisteddfod highlighting that it is the biggest cultural festival to be held in Europe attracting over 175,000 visitors annually. She outlined the aims of the Eisteddfod today to celebrate Welsh language and culture as part of a vibrant and welcoming event. The Chief Executive outlined the importance of having local influences on the Eisteddfod and the opportunity for Rhondda Cynon Taf to put its own stamp on the event. She highlighted the importance of working together with the Local Authority to ensure the inclusion of all communities and to achieve the desired outcomes of encouraging both local residents and visitors to the Eisteddfod. She provided Members with the detail of seven legacies that can be achieved through the Eisteddfod, including Community, Culture, Linguistic, Economy, Digital, Inclusivity and Volunteering.

The Eisteddfod Head of Communications continued the presentation outlining to Members details of the Eisteddfod Community Project including welcoming a dedicated Project Officer from Rhondda Cynon Taf. She informed Members of the strategic plan to create a community forum and work with groups in the local area to provide a taste of the Eisteddfod. Details of the 2 phases of work were provided to Members outlining the steps that will be taken to engage with groups county wide.

The Chair thanked the Eisteddfod Chief Executive for the presentation and emphasised the excitement across Rhondda Cynon Taf to be hosting the Eisteddfod 2024 and supported the strategic plan for the involvement of communities across the County Borough. Members echoed this excitement and welcomed the opportunity to provide an Eisteddfod that was inclusive of all residents. One Member asked about plans for the announcement of the location of the Maes for the Eisteddfod. The Chief Executive advised Members that plans and discussions were still being held regarding specific sites.

The Chair concluded the discussions by once again thanking the Officers for attending today's meeting to provide the presentation and echoed Members support for an inclusive and inter-generational Eisteddfod in Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2024.

#### 15 **To consider passing the following resolution:**

It was **RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for Item 5 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt

information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act.

**16 National Heritage Lottery Fund Projects Update**

The Service Director – Community Services provided the Steering Group with an update in respect of the National Heritage Lottery Fund Projects.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group considered the summary and assessment and **RESOLVED** to note the update contained in the report.

**This meeting closed at 3.15 pm**

**CLLR R LEWIS  
CHAIR.**

## RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ARTS STEERING GROUP

14<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2022

#### AN UPDATE ON THE ARTS COUNCIL OF WALES INVESTMENT REVIEW AND THE ARTS SERVICE'S FUTURE FOCUS

#### REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELLBEING AND CULTURAL SERVICES, COUNCILLOR, RHYS LEWIS

**Author(s):** Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Arts & Culture Manager

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update members of the Steering Group on the Arts Council of Wales' Investment Review and the Arts Service's future focus.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Strategic Culture and Arts Steering Group:

- 2.1 Note the update within the report.
- 2.2 Consider whether they would like any further information.

#### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the members are updated on the Arts Council of Wales' Investment Review and the Arts Services' future focus.

#### **4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's RCT Theatres has been a member of the Arts Council of Wales Arts Portfolio of annual revenue funded clients since 2010.
- 4.2 RCT Theatres receive revenue funding of approximately £150,000 as presenting venues and a producing company.
- 4.3 The last Investment Review identified the Arts Portfolio Wales clients for the period 2015 to 2020. RCT Theatres were successful in continuing to be recognised as an Arts Portfolio Wales client at that time.

## **5. ARTS COUNCIL OF WALES INVESTMENT REVIEW**

- 5.1 The latest ACW Investment Review was to have taken place in early 2020. In light of the pandemic, the decision was made to defer the process and timetable.
- 5.2 A public consultation on the ACW Investment Review's guidance and application ended on January 10<sup>th</sup> 2020. The ACW's response to this consultation can be found [here](#).
- 5.3 A series of Investment Review workshops were held during September 2021 to gather further feedback from the sector on the process.
- 5.4 The review process was to resume at the end of 2021, with assessment of applications taking place in 2022 and a new Arts Portfolio Wales announced in April 2023.
- 5.5 The ACW have once again delayed the date to start funding a new Arts Portfolio Wales until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.
- 5.6 In its press release on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021, the ACW stated that:
- “This is to make sure that the organisation has more time to respond to changes that have been suggested during a series of workshops with the arts sector, and so that the process can be synchronised with the appointment of a new Chief Executive.”
- 5.7 Further details are expected in early 2022; however, we understand that we will remain an Arts Portfolio Wales member in receipt of revenue funding during 2022/23 and 2023/2024.

## **6. PAVING THE WAY FORWARD**

### **6.1 Resetting the Dial**

- 6.1.1 As reported in a paper to the Steering Group members at the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 meeting, as a public arts service we need to consider the new context in which we are working in and the impact of Covid on our staff, communities and the creative sector.
- 6.1.2 Following on from our participation in the Arts Council of Wales funded 'Designing Public Value with Purpose' programme, and in preparation for determining our priorities for our ACW Investment Review application, we are working with Lisa Baxter of The Experience Business to consider



our next steps in relation to service priorities and delivery, and to support us in 'resetting the dial'.

- 6.1.3 Alongside her work with us, Lisa Baxter is working with the City of Bergen (Norway) on a similar project seeking to broaden civic understanding of how arts, culture and creativity can support community flourishing and trial new modes of funding, artist involvement and community engagement to that end.
- 6.1.4 In 'resetting the dial' we are planning a series of creative conversations with our communities, including theatre users, artists and reaching wider to identify those unheard voices within our communities.
- 6.1.5 The Graduate Community Engagement Officer commenced in post in September 2021 and is developing relationships to develop the concept of the cultural hub in Treorchy.
- 6.1.6 The Weston Jerwood Creative Bursary Fellow, who commenced in post in June 2021, is developing relationships with the creative sector across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

## **6.2 National Eisteddfod**

- 6.2.1 The National Eisteddfod will now visit Rhondda Cynon Taf in 2024.
- 6.2.2 As we heard at the meeting of the Steering Group on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021, the Eisteddfod has secured funding from the National Heritage Lottery fund to deliver a pilot community project within Rhondda Cynon Taf, creating opportunities for local people to take part in a wide range of pilot events, inspired by Welsh culture and heritage.
- 6.2.3 As part of this project, a Community Forum has been established in RCT, with representatives of local and national groups and organisations that operate locally. The Arts Service is a member of this forum, which the Eisteddfod will use to advise on their plans and help to identify opportunities locally to target resources and work.
- 6.2.4 The Arts Service is also meeting regularly with the Eisteddfod's Artistic and Community Team to share knowledge, developments and discuss ideas for collaboration

## **6.3 Arts Council of Wales: Connect and Flourish**

- 6.3.1 Many creatives whose practice we have helped to develop have been successful in their bids to the Arts Council of Wales' Connect and Flourish fund. The Arts Service is a key connector for these projects.

- 6.3.2 In a paper to the Steering Group members at the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 meeting we outlined a list of those Connect and Flourish projects taking place within the county borough.
- 6.3.3 A further development has been the service's involvement in the Age Cymru, Leeway Production and Menter Iaith RhCT project, 'Porth y Cwtsh'.
- 6.3.4 'Porth y Cwtsh' is a research and development place-based project focused on Porth. It aims to be the catalyst to open hearts and minds to look up and visualise future self. The project looks to build on what's strong, not on what's wrong.
- 6.3.5 In our connector role, the Arts Service has brokered the relationship between the project partners and the Council's Town Centre Team, with the team identifying a financial commitment and partnership agreement towards a project application to the next Connect and Flourish round in early 2022.
- 6.3.6 Furthermore, the 'Gwarchodfa Natur Pontypridd Nature Reserve' project, led by Addo Creative alongside Rhondda Cynon Taf based artists Catrin Doyle and Anne-Mie Melis, and education research company Pontydysgu, has also been invited to submit an application following a successful expression of interest. We have connected the project to the Canolfan Calon Taf development at Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, as well as the Council's wider Parks and Countryside Team.
- 6.3.7 This project will look to explore how sustainable creative strategies and artist-led interventions, co-created by communities, organisations & artists based in Pontypridd and the surrounding area may reimagine Pontypridd as a nature reserve and engage new audiences / participants in environmental activism, promoting biodiversity and the development of sustainable ways of being and living in their local area.
- 6.4 **Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Award for Civic Arts Organisations**
- 6.4.1 In November 2021, we submitted an application to the [Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation's Award for Civic Arts Organisations](#). The second edition of the Award for Civic Arts Organisations shines a spotlight on how arts organisations are rethinking their own relationships with the communities they serve as we emerge from a period of disruption and acceleration of trends in the art world and in society. They are offering one award of £100,000 and two of £25,000.

6.4.2 The award is for organisations to continue their important and impactful work with their communities.

6.4.3 We were notified on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022 that we have not been successful in making the shortlist of organisations; however, we are eligible to apply again for the next edition of the Award for Civic Arts Organisations. Information on the 2022 shortlisted organisations can be found [here](#), with the Wales Millennium Centre featuring as the only organisation based in Wales.

## **6.5 Capital Developments**

6.5.1 Capital improvements are taking place at RCT Theatres, including to the foyer at the Park and Dare Theatre and the gentlemen's stall toilets at the Coliseum Theatre. Funding has also been secured corporately to replace the carpet in the auditorium and to install a flexible seating system at the Coliseum Theatre

6.5.2 Furthermore, funding has been secured for capital works that will enable us to further develop our community engagement:

- A Welsh Government Place-making grant, through the Council's Regeneration Team, and a Play Sufficiency grant, through the Council's Play Service, to develop the land adjacent to the Park and Dare Theatre as an outdoor community participation and performance space;

6.5.3 Within the Pontypridd area, the YMa development, funded by the Council, Arts Council of Wales, the Welsh Government's Community Facilities Programme fund and Moondance, will be opening its doors in Spring 2022, managed by Artis Community; and the successful Levelling Up funding bid to UK Government will redevelop the Muni Arts Centre, a partnership between the Council and Awen Cultural Trust, to reopen in 2024.

## **7. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT**

7.1 No consultation exercise has been required.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY**

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

## **9. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment is not needed because the contents of the report are for information purposes only.

**10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

10.1 There are no financial implications aligned to the recommendations in this report.

**11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

11.1 There are no legal implications aligned to the recommendations in this report.

**12. LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

12.1 The Arts Service's offer continues to support the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities.

12.2 Our focus going forward will enable us to more effectively contribute to the seven national wellbeing goals, particularly:

- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language;
- A prosperous Wales;
- A healthier Wales;
- A Wales of cohesive communities.

12.3 The service provision and way of working is consistent with the sustainable approach promoted by the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act through the five ways of working:

- Long-term – understanding our public value and relevance enables us to gain support for a long-term and sustainable arts and creative industries provision within the County Borough.
- Prevention – by understanding our operating context, communities' needs, concerns, opportunities, and aspiration we can provide engagement and participation opportunities that address needs identified.
- Integrated – understanding our public value and relevance will enable us to contribute more effectively to a range of local, regional, and national strategic priorities, in an integrated and coherent way.
- Collaboration – understanding our public value and relevance will enable us to identify stakeholders (locally, regionally, and nationally), whose values align with ours and with whom we can work in partnership to meet our communities' needs.

- Involvement – exploring the communities’ needs and exploring how the service can support through creative conversations, co-creation, collaboration, and professional networks.

### **13. CONCLUSION**

- 13.1 This report updates members of the Steering Group on the Arts Council of Wales’ Investment Review and the Arts Services’ future focus.
- 13.2 The Arts Service will be considering its priorities going forward to further understand and develop its civic role and public value.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**STRATEGIC CULTURE AND ARTS STEERING GROUP**

**6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2021**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR - PUBLIC HEALTH, PROTECTION AND  
COMMUNITY SERVICES, IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CABINET MEMBER  
FOR STRONGER COMMUNITIES, WELLBEING AND CULTURAL  
SERVICES, COUNCILLOR, RHYS LEWIS**

**AN UPDATE ON THE ARTS COUNCIL OF WALES INVESTMENT REVIEW  
AND THE ARTS SERVICE'S FUTURE FOCUS**

**Background Papers - None**

**Officer to contact:** Caroline O'Neill – Strategic Arts & Culture Manager